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THE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES;

OR

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

IN THE

APOSTOLIC AGE.

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

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LIST OF CONTENTS.

Page

INTRODUCTION, 1

BOOK FIRST.

THE CHURCH AMONG THE JEWS, 9

§ 1. The Prospect (Acts i. 1—11), ... 9
§ 2. The Last Preparation (Chap. i. 12—26), ... 31
§ 3. Founding and Manifestation of the Church (Chap. ii. 1—13), 40
§ 4. The First Preaching of the Apostles (Chap. ii. 14—36), . 63
§ 5. The First Growth of the Church (Chap. ii. 37—47), . . . 70
§ 6. The First Miracle (Chap. iii.), ... 82
§ 7. The First Hostility (Chap. iv. 1—22), ... 94
§ 8. The Triumphant Power of the Church (Chap. iv. 23—37), . 103
§ 9. The First Danger from Within (Chap. v. 1—16), . . 109
§ 10. The First Suffering of the Apostles (Chap. v. 17—42), . 118
§ 11. The First Dissension within the Church (Chap. vi. 1—7), . 128
§ 12. Stephen the First Martyr (Chap. vi. 8—Chap. vii. 50), . 133

BOOK SECOND.

THE CHURCH IN ITS PASSAGE FROM THE JEWS TO THE GENTILES, 171

§ 13. Diffusion of the Gospel without the Apostles (Chap. viii. 1—4), 171
§ 14. Philip the Deacon in Samaria (Chap. viii. 5—24), . . 184
§ 15. Philip the Deacon baptizes the Chamberlain from Ethiopia (Chap. viii. 25—40), ... 198
§ 16. Conversion and Call of Saul of Tarsus (Chap. ix. 1—36), . 211
§ 17. The Condition of the Church in Judea (Chap. x. 1—7), . 249
§ 18. The First Fruits of the Gentiles (Chap. x. 11—18), . . 257
§ 19. Rise of the First Gentile Churches (Chap. xi. 19—30), . 286
§ 20. The Hostility of Judea at its height, and its Retribution (Chap. xii. 1—25), ... 307

024143

BOOK THIRD.

PART FIRST.

Page

THE CHURCH AMONG THE GENTILES, 347

§ 21. Origin of the Mission in the Church of Antioch (Chap. xii. 23—xiii. 3), ... 347

§ 22. The First Fruits of St Paul's Apostolate (Chap. xiii. 4—12), 362

§ 23. The First Missionary Journey through Asia Minor (Chap. xiii. 13—xiv. 28), ... 382

INTRODUCTION.

THE complaint which was made of old by S. Chrysostom of the neglect of the "Acts of the Apostles" has not only held good down to our own days, but there never was perhaps so much ground for it as at present. At no time, it is true, has either interest or attention been wanting for certain details of this book; and in this respect our own age has done its part, especially as regards the investigation of its chronology. But although it has been the aim of these inquiries, and particularly of those conducted by Wieseler, to take in the whole of the book, yet, amidst a great abundance of matters, the chronological data admit too easily of being separated from the historical subject to which they owe their interest, for the inquirer into times and dates to feel himself imperatively called upon to enter upon the inner course of events. With certain other special inquiries it was a more immediate duty to do so; the fact, however, that it has not as yet been fulfilled, only proves that the neglect of this book still continues. But the most obvious testimony to this neglect is the confession, which the theological science of our own times has made with respect to the Acts of the Apostles, of which it avows its inability to point out the plan and the object. We shall, it is true, find reason to consider this avowal as a step in advance towards such knowledge, rather than a retrograde movement. For, if a clear and definite insight into the inner structure and composition of this book had ever been obtained and established, it would never again have been so entirely lost to the Church. This admission, therefore, which, in very recent times, has been made in so many different quarters, may

serve as a proof, that a perception of the internal unity of this history has never yet been vouchsafed to theological science, and that it has been reserved to modern times to become sensible of this need. True it is, that this confession is not accompanied with a distinct consciousness of a want; Schleiermacher even holds it to be perfectly consistent in an historical book to be devoid of an object. As soon, however, as it is once admitted, that the only purpose that we can rationally demand or look for in the Acts of the Apostles, can be no other than the oneness of that spiritual impulse, which at first moved its author to write, and while writing, accompanied him throughout his task, we shall be forced to admit, that it is beneath the dignity of a canonical book to be without a purpose. This we must admit unless we are willing to grant, that that Holy Spirit, to whose operation, however, we must ascribe the canonical books, is in no case a spirit, but something else. In this confession, therefore, we have every reason to see a sign, that the old fault of neglecting these its sacred "origines" is at last acknowledged, and is in the way to be ultimately repaired by the Church.

As, however, it very frequently happens that the development of the Church does not proceed in a straight line, so happens it also in the present case. For the immediate result of this avowal has been, that the school of negative criticism has taken possession of the question thus left unoccupied by historical inquiry. As long ago as in 1836, Bauer began to advance a theory with regard to the missing purpose of this Apostolic History; and this beginning has in the same spirit been worked out and brought to an end by Zeller in the fifth and last of his articles "on the History of the Apostles" in "The Theological Annual." Here no doubt a purpose is pointed out to us; but the further the demonstration proceeds, the more entirely does the historical value of the work itself disappear beneath the hands of these inquirers. In fact, the setting up of a purpose in this sense, is neither more nor less that the total upsetting of the history narrated by the book in question: the work of patient and clever construction is a work of great destruction and devastation. This constructive criticism, which seeks to set up a purpose, has also a dim consciousness of the true nature of its labours; and with all its hardihood, it cannot get rid of a certain feeling of

shame. On this account, it endeavours to *mask* under the milder name of an apologetic and conciliatory tendency the grave charges of misrepresenting and suppressing historical facts which it accumulates and brings against the book before us. Even Zeller, when, at the conclusion of his labours, he looks back upon the waste and desolation which he has made in the Sacred History, cannot help but add the miserable consolation, "If we have lost much of pretended information concerning the Apostolical age, yet, instead thereof, we gain an original record of the state of the Church in the second century. It may well be asked; whether the gain does not outweigh the loss?"

If, then, the negation of any object or purpose in the history of the Apostles enforces upon us the necessary conclusion, that this book ought no longer to be read carelessly and incidentally, much more so does the assertion of such an object lead to the same result. That this neglect has reached its limit, is proved by that very denial of all historical value in the work, which, as it has sought to establish itself by all the appliances of learning and ingenuity, gains an easy triumph over the historical view, labouring, as it does, under the disadvantage we have already mentioned, of a want of consistency.

Still more pressing, however, does this want become when considered from the practical point of view. The questions respecting the right form and constitution of the Church both as a whole and in its parts, are so far from being as yet settled, that it is only now that their importance and urgency are at length fully felt. But these questions, one and all, have one aspect which, for their solution, turns immediately to the sacred beginnings of the Church, supposing that is that they have been authentically preserved to us. For how can we hope to arrive at any satisfactory resolution of that aspect of these questions, which looks to the "Acts of the Apostles," so long as the case so stands, that either we must give up the historical character of the book, if we wish to maintain the opinion, that it possesses a oneness of design, or if we would assert its claims to the rank of authentic history, we must renounce all pretensions in its behalf to unity of purpose? For what help do we gain for the solution of practical questions from the fact, that in this book one matter refers to another, and that all are mutually dependent, if this dependence

is not real but fictitious; and of what use is a series of particular narratives, unless one and the same spirit has determined for each its special place in the whole, and so guarded against that anomaly which, in this domain of inquiry, has so often made itself felt, and to the present day still subsists, while one man appeals to one passage of the history in support of his opinion, and another defends the very opposite conclusion by adducing another?

The needs of the Church, therefore, no less than the canonical character of the Acts of the Apostles, demand that this book of sacred history should be rescued from the fragmentary handling which it has hitherto been exposed to. To prepare the way for the accomplishment of this task, which has been laid upon theology, and which it cannot decline, will be the attempt of the present work. It will keep in view the chief points of this problem; for, assuming the strict historical character of the narratives from the beginning to the end of the Acts of the Apostles, it undertakes to point out a unity of connexion between all its parts. And these are the results of our labours. The Acts of the Apostles embrace that portion of the history of the Church, which contains the canonical beginnings, whose ecclesiastical continuations and developments are proceeding even in our own days. And the history brings these canonical principles in so authentic a manner before us, that not only may their inward course be distinctly traced, but also their normal value for all relations and conditions of the Church, which are comprised within that period, may with certainty be inferred.

It is easy to foresee, that this conclusion will be sure to incur the charge, of falling into the very extreme of all previous historical views of the Acts of the Apostles; for, it will be urged, that it seeks to discover in this book far more of plan and purpose than the book really could, and than it actually does contain. To this I have, in the outset, no other answer to give than an analogy which I now adduce. He who contemplates nature in her exterior aspects, discerns nothing but the life and motion of a mass of objects apparently without plan or method; he, however, whose glance penetrates into her internal economy cannot fail to discover in them her final cause of order and law. And is not our experience the same in the case of those original works in which the mind of man displays its creative genius? The

first impression which the works of Homer or Shakspeare make upon us is that of a wild luxuriance of nature; and yet commentators have not yet found a limit to the discovery of leading thoughts pervading and running through the whole. And are we to think less than this of the Holy Ghost, who prepares and sanctifies for Himself His human instruments for the production of the Scriptures which in all ages of the Church are to lend to every holy thought, and to every spiritual impulse, the support of a divine certainty?

FIRST BOOK.

THE CHURCH AMONG THE JEWS.

FIRST BOOK.

THE CHURCH AMONG THE JEWS.

§ I. THE PROSPECT.

(Acts i. vv. 1—21.)

From the commencement of the third Gospel, we know, that St Luke not only had himself a distinct consciousness of the object of his literary labours, but that he also sought to make his readers acquainted with his own idea of them. It would almost seem, then, as if the opening of the Acts, precisely in the same way as the much discussed Proœmium of his Gospel, were intended to introduce Theophilus, and after him all its other readers, to the history which follows. However, at the very point where we expect that the discourse is about to pass on to the coming narrrative, it breaks off, and without farther announcement at once brings certain historical matters before us. Apparently, therefore, we must put up with the disappointment, and resign all hope of receiving any information as to the view with which the author had planned his work. Had, however, the same amount of attention been bestowed on this introduction to the Acts of the Apostles as has been devoted to the opening passages of the Gospel, it would long since have been seen that this appearance is deceptive, and that, in the present work also we are by no means left in the dark by St Luke, as to the point of view, from which he would have us contemlate this his narrative of the earliest times of the Church.

It is quite true, that we are referred to the Gospel, and that precisely at the very point, where we should expect some allusion to the history, which is the pendent of the Gospel, does the narration itself commence. But, in short, this very reference to the Gospel contains indirectly, highly important intimations as to the plan of the Acts. For the narrative which immediately follows does not by any means form a part of the history itself, which we are considering, but is, in fact, a further exposition of those hints. So that it is only when the course of the passage (which, beginning with the words *τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον*, leads us thereby confidently to expect some light to be thrown on the second treatise) comes to a pause—viz. at the end of the 11th verse, that a full and satisfactory *prospect over the subsequent* series of developments is afforded us.

First of all, let us put together all that our introduction tells us of the Gospel. From the words *ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν*, we perceive, that throughout the Gospel, St Luke intends Jesus to be regarded as the acting subject of his history. Consequently, whatever else the Gospel narrates, whether the actions of other persons or the sufferings of the Saviour Himself; His labours either in doing or in teaching, are to be considered as the central point, from which the whole is determined. But now it is of especial significance, that in this passage there occurs a word which, corresponding to the term *πρῶτον*, refers us with equal precision as well to what follows as to what precedes. It is the word *ἤρξατο*. With good reason has Meyer maintained, that this word has a peculiar emphasis, and has therefore rightly rejected all such expositions of it as would explain away its force. But the explanation, which he himself proposes, is equally fatal to the emphatic character which he claims for it. He sees in it, for instance, an antithesis of this kind: "Jesus began—the Apostles carried on." But the peculiar force, which Meyer has just claimed for *ἤρξατο*, depends, so far as I can see, on its position, standing as it does before the name which, in itself, comprises the whole subject matter of the Gospel. But this position is totally overlooked in Meyer's explanation of the passage. For, in such a statement, the opposition of the two subjects would be the paramount idea. But this would have required the arrangement to be: *ὧν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἤρξατο*—which arrangement,

independently of any special secondary idea, would, moreover, have been the most natural. Neither is any support afforded to this exposition, by the fact that St Luke, with evident reference to the future, points so emphatically to the Apostles, and even exhibits them as entering upon and succeeding to the work of the Lord. For not only does the very name of Apostles invariably point out their dependence on the Lord (see Luke vi. 13; Matt. x. 25), and prevent us, in any correct view and discourse, from ever making their labours co-ordinate with the labours of their Lord, but St Luke, in order to indicate that even in the present passage he does not forget the great difference between our Lord and His disciples, brings this dependence prominently forward by employing the relative clause "whom He had chosen" (cf. Luke vi. 13; John xv. 16.)

The impressive force of the word ἤρξατο will, therefore, be duly appreciated, as soon as, with Olshausen (in loc.) and Schneckenburger (see his Zweck der Apostelgeschichte p. 197), we regard it as characterising and referring to the whole of Jesus' labours during his existence on earth—in other words, as describing the whole course of his labours up to the time of His ascension, as *initiatory and preparatory?*

If, therefore, at the commencement of a second book all that had been narrated in the first is characterised as the *work* of the initiatory labours of Jesus, is not this a plain intimation that in the second book we are to look for an account of the further continuance of those labours? But before we pursue this clue any farther we must also take into consideration all else that is here asserted of the Gospel. For the passage, in which these assertions are found, is, to our mind, a proof that it is intended by means of them to furnish us with an introduction to the "Acts of the Apostles." In the first place the qualification of the Gospel narrative by the words περὶ πάντων designates it as complete. For that these words are, as Meyer will have it, to be restricted to the subjective capacity of St Luke is in no wise indicated, either here or in Luke i. 2, where, moreover, the words ἄνωθεν and καθεξῆς, more than cumulatively, point clearly to the objective side. And if we look to the Gospel itself, it evidently leaves behind it an impression, that in its design it aimed at objective completeness, if only we do not conceive of

this completeness as purely external and mechanical. Closely connected with this intimation of completeness, is the precise determination of the chronological limits of the Gospel history. If now the Gospel narrative bespeaks a writer possessed of talent and skill for the compendious exposition of historical events, and this same author in the present work refers us to that earlier one with especial reference to this character of completeness, surely, by so doing, he does right earnestly exhort us to look for a similar exhaustive comprehensiveness in the following narrative. And if, moreover, in the case of the former treatise, a precise chronological limit is set forth with emphatic distinctness, it then becomes difficult to suppose, (what, however, has been so often asserted,) that the continuation of that narrative should be left to proceed with utter vagueness of purpose, without any definite boundary, and quite at random.

The circumstance, therefore, that our introduction refers us back to the Gospel, has afforded us no inconsiderable assistance towards forming a right estimate of the Acts of the Apostles. Let us now see then whether the following positions, all of which, like so many links of the same chain, are connected with the first, will not render us further service. At first sight, there is something surprising in the circumstance that the continuation of the *sentence* in verse 3, connecting itself with the mention of the Apostles by means of the relative, goes on to narrate all that took place in the period between the Resurrection and the Ascension. For, on the one hand, we do not meet, as we should expect, with any announcement respecting the second narrative corresponding to the mention of the Gospel; and also, on the other hand, we are carried back to a period which, to all appearance, belongs exclusively to the earlier history. But, as regards the former of these difficulties, we must bear in mind, that this very reference to the Gospel does (as we have already seen) suggest, even of itself, a general notion of the book before us, and that consequently it does not allow us to feel the want of any more express information about it. And if now it should admit of being shown that the account, which is introduced without any natural connection, and does not belong to the proper subject matter of the work which we are discussing, is really the continuation, suggested by the actual facts of the case, and the

completion of the introduction commenced in the first two verses, then this solution of the second difficulty would furnish a perfectly satisfactory explanation of the anacoluthon objected to. Now this can in fact be satisfactorily proved. And since in this very introduction we possess a key, provided for us by the author himself, for the right interpretation of the historical contents of his narrative, it becomes necessary for us, keeping, however, constantly in view our own historical object, to enter somewhat minutely into its details.

Unquestionably, the description which begins with ver. 3 goes back to a period which not only had just before been alluded to as belonging to the times of the Gospel, but of which also the evangelic narrative presents at its close an unmistakeable parallel. But the differences, between our opening and the conclusion of the other book, were evidently designed to lead to the inference, that the period of the Forty Days, as a time of transition, admits of two distinct modes of consideration, as Schneckenburger has already intimated (see pp. 11, 12.) On the one hand, this period closes the initiatory work of Jesus and completes it, while on the other, it prepares for and introduces the future labours of the Apostles. It is under the former aspect that the Gospel contemplates this period, while the Acts of the Apostles views it from the latter. That the Acts of the Apostles does thus contemplate the interval between the first and the second labours of Jesus, follows directly from many indications. It is, for instance, observed of this period that Jesus shewed Himself to His disciples. This expression points out an obvious difference from the earlier and constant intercourse of Jesus with His Apostles; a distinction which He Himself alludes to in the words ἔτι ὢν σὺν ὑμῖν, and, on the other, it intimates an equally obvious approximation to that later and higher form of existence, in which He manifested Himself from on High to His disciples on earth. To this His subsequent, more exalted, form of existence, which belongs expressly to the second treatise, and with which the Acts of the Apostles is concerned, there are still more decided allusions in the expressions ζῶντα μετὰ τὸ παθεῖν and ὀπτανόμενος. His life after His passion, which was even the agonising endurance of death, is not, indeed, a renewal of life in the weak flesh, but a life in that flesh which has passed triumphantly through death.

But such a life points beyond the present and actual world, up to a higher sphere. And exactly to this higher sphere are we led by the word ὀπτανόμενος ; for it signifies that, in order to converse with His disciples during these forty days, He quitted the invisible world on each occasion (cf. xxvi. 16). With respect to the Gospel, however, *it enables us to recognise* distinctly enough the different view it takes of this period, in the summary way in which it briefly notices the whole intercourse of our Lord with His Apostles during these forty days, as forming the close of His whole life in their society; for it notices it in such a manner as might perchance suggest the conclusion, that His Ascension followed immediately after His Resurrection. Accordingly that pretended contradiction between the Gospel and the Acts in regard to the time of the Ascension (to which Zeller—[Theolog. Jahrb. 1849, p. 6—8]—has reduced the four discrepancies which, as it is asserted, beset this matter) admits of a very simple and satisfactory solution by pointing to the different points of view, from which the two narratives contemplated the same fact. And further, if we keep before our minds this different mode of contemplation, it appears to be perfectly in keeping that the Gospel should give especial prominence to such conversations of the Lord as had for their object the definitive confirmation of His earlier discourses, while the Acts only mentions these conversations briefly, under the designation of "the things concerning the kingdom of God," λέγων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ (see Olshausen in locum) and that on the other hand the narrative in the Acts brings forward, with special minuteness of detail, our Lord's last interview with His disciples, as enlightening us, in the most significant manner possible, as to the future existence of the Lord, while the Gospel of St Luke, on the contrary, in its general account of the intercourse of the Risen Jesus with His disciples, loses sight of this object, and almost allows it to escape altogether. But exactly in proportion as we are conscious of the difference of the Gospel account by the same author, and are sensible of the great impressiveness, with which our introduction gives prominence to it, the more bound are we to give due consideration to it, if we would gain the right point of view for understanding the subsequent history.

Now the first thing that our Lord has to say to His disciples,

at His last interview with them, is the prohibition to quit Jerusalem. We see from this, that, even though immediately after the passion the Apostles may have gone back to their Galilean homes, (Matt. xxvi. 32 ; xxviii. 15; John xxi. 1), they must subsequently have returned to Jerusalem, and that it was there that the solemn parting was to take place, and that there also the grand and blissful prospect into the future was to be opened out to them. But even after this event they were still to remain in Jerusalem ; for it was there that they were to await their own inauguration for their future labours. Accordingly it is at this solemn moment that it is for the first time intimated to them that that new thing, which was soon to come to light, was to be regarded by them as closely associated with the city of Jerusalem. In the same way, therefore, that Jesus, at His first public appearance before the assembled people, earnestly opposes the erroneous notion that His miracles and teaching had in view, the abrogation of the law and the prophets ; so in His last hours on earth He forbids His Apostles to leave the city of Jehovah. The sanctity of this spot is thus pointed out as so great, that no profanation soever that had come upon it since David's time—nay, not even the shedding of that sacred blood (Matt. xxvii. 25) could avail to destroy its holiness (cf. Matt. xxvii. 53). And just as on the Mountain of Blessings, the preliminary assurance of the inviolable sanctity of the letter of the law was rendered necessary by the fact that the following discourse was not unlikely to impress the unenlightened mind with an idea that it asserted the direct contrary ; so too this final intimation of the importance of Jerusalem for the coming times attains to its full significance only with the announcement that follows, that the future was to be different from the past.

Jesus refers His apostles to the promise of the Holy Ghost (vv. 4, 5). And He sets before them the fulfilment of this promise as the proximate object of their expectation. It is worthy of remark, however, that He speaks of this promise not as His own, but rather as the promise of the Father (cf. Luke xxiv. 29, Acts ii. 33), even though in describing the nature of this promise it is altogether in the tone of the New Testament that He speaks. Still it is this startling mode of expression that first sets before us the subject-matter of this announcement in its full light. If, that

is, the coming of the Holy Ghost be really announced as the subject of this promise, then evidently it is not sufficient to refer to a few passages in the Old Testament, such for instance as Joel iii. 1, Zech. xii. 10, in which this promise may be found. By such references this promise would merely be set forth as one among many others, but it would by no means be obvious how the great event which Jesus had here in view could comformably there to be precisely called "The Promise of the Father." But now this difficulty is met by the striking New Testament form in which the promise is here clothed. The mention, for instance, of the Baptism of John, is intended to signify, that the entire history of the Old Testament had not attained its object, viz., the sanctification, and the purification of the people. For John, as the last preacher of the Old Testament revelation, who already sees the dawn of a new æra, and therefore scarcely belong any longer to the Old, (see Matt. xi. 13), preaches to all classes of the people without exception the necessity of Baptism, and at once convinces *every one* of the necessity of it (see Matt. iii. 5, 7, xxi. 32). This fact, therefore, is a most obvious proof, that all that Jehovah had hitherto done for the sanctification of Israel, and all that Israel had received of Holiness, had in no wise produced any permanent effect. But perhaps the Baptism of John had effected that which all the prophets had not availed to do? The sign which he set up in Israel, and the word which besides he preached, prove the contrary. How could water remove an impurity so deeply seated, and effect *a new* cleanness there, where all the operations of the Spirit had been in vain? And is it not precisely this, that constitutes the distinctive peculiarity of St John, that he points onwards from his own person and his own work to one higher and mightier? The Baptism of John is, therefore, the significant token which, the more plainly it shews that the result of the past was a total failure of sanctification, points the more forcibly to the opening Future as to its end and consummation. Now, this Future is here announced as immediately approaching by him whose own office it is to introduce it. And since this future is also designated as a Baptism, its connection with the labours of John is thereby distinctly intimated, while its description as a Baptism with the Holy Ghost points out the difference between it and its type. The connection is

this: that which in the one case occurs as a type, appears in the latter to be fulfilled; the contrast is, that in the latter the Holy Ghost takes the place which water holds in the former. Now, this difference not only shews why the baptism of John could only be a sign and not the reality, but also throws some light upon the question why the case should have so stood with regard to the past history of Israel as the Baptism of John implies. As the future is described as a Baptism with the Holy Ghost; a specific difference is here plainly established between this and all previous operations of the Spirit. In the *washing* of Baptism the whole body is changed; as unclean it goes into the water, and as a new body it comes up again. Its identity, indeed, is preserved; but its whole outer condition, relatively to purity and freshness, is the direct contrary of what it was. If then we have given us as the instrument of such a change, not water but the Holy Ghost, the only effect that can be meant must be one which changes the whole inner man as completely as water does the body. When, therefore, the promise runs: "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," the identity of the person is indeed shown to be still remaining; the same that go into it, come out again; but in the process the whole inward being of the recipient is put off and a new nature received. These words make it clear at once what it was that was wanting under the Old Covenant. Mighty and powerful as may have been on all occasions the working of the Holy Ghost, recorded in the Old Testament, we nowhere find a trace of this completeness, of such a thorough and entire putting off the old, and of such an equally comprehensive putting on the new within the sphere of the inner man. Moreover, from the history of the most eminent characters of the Old Testament we clearly see, that no operation of the Spirit, similar to this, ever took place under the Old Covenant. For what is the cause why Moses, and David, and Solomon failed and came short, not merely in this or that particular, but even fell into sin and broke down, precisely in the very calling to which they were appointed, and for which they had been endowed with the Holy Ghost? This can have had no other cause than the fact, that the inmost depths of their sinful nature had not been overcome. But now, if under the Old Testament such an intimate transformation of man's nature was in no wise attained to, this necessarily implies that all the influ-

ences of the Divine Revelation and grace under the old Testament economy could not be permanent, but that they must ultimately have been overborne again by the corrupt principle of man's nature. And, in fact, that after all its sanctification, nothing absolutely pure was to be found in the whole body of Israel—of this we have a decisive testimony in the Baptism of John. This consideration alone enables us to understand the words "promise of the Father." If, we mean, the whole history of the Old Testament appears to have but this result, that all God's grace and all His operations in Israel were without effect, precisely because the Holy Spirit had not as yet penetrated to the inmost depths of man's being, then the only condition on which it could be allowable to speak of the Future of Israel, of a fulfilling of her history, was that the whole people should be gifted with such a degree of the grace of the Holy Spirit as should work with no less eradicating power on the old impurity than with invigorating and life-giving energy on the new purity. All the promises which guarantee to Israel a future perfection, involve consequently the promise of the Spirit—or are precisely so many promises of the Spirit. But since, in fact, all the promises of the Old Testament came eventually to this, that the history of Israel is not to be destitute of all result, but is finally to reach its purpose, then the promise of the Spirit is not one among many promises, but even the sum of all other promises, and as such may fitly be denominated "the promise of the Father."

Finally, in this announcement of the risen Saviour we come to consider the temporal limitation: "not many days hence." In these words, indeed, there is involved a new and important element, which at the same time reflects a clear light on that meaning of the discourse, which we have already ascertained. The limitation of the time here given, is for instance, of such a nature that the questions necessarily arise: Wherefore not before? or why not later? And by means of these questions we are carried to the proper author of the approaching change. When it is said in John vii. 39: The Holy Ghost was not yet (given) for that Jesus was not yet glorified, the glorifying of Jesus is assigned as the cause of the coming of the Holy Ghost. And if we further examine into the grounds of this: it is evidently owing to the peculiarity of the person of Jesus, that in His case the

Baptism of John was not only a sign but effected in truth both negatively and positively that which it signified. In the Transfiguration, however, that was completed with respect to His outward being which with regard to His inward being, was commenced in Baptism. Therewith the Holy Ghost for the first time took up His abode within man. This pervading of human nature by the Holy Ghost so as externally to manifest Himself, was not, however, designed to remain final and complete in itself, but from the very beginning it was purposed and brought about on account of, and in order to be, the common good of all men. As soon, therefore, as the fulfilment of this fellowship of the Holy Ghost with humanity had been effected, the time of its communication was arrived. This communication, however, cannot be accomplished independently of all rules; but inasmuch as it relates to the inner sphere of man's being, it must take place in obedience to certain moral laws. There only can the Spirit be imparted where a due sensibility exists for its reception. This fitness, however, must be awakened by the revelation of the Spirit Himself. As then, the locus of the revelation of the Spirit within the human race is the person of Jesus, the recipient capacity for the communication of the Spirit must be looked for there where the contact with the manifestation of Jesus had been cherished in faith and love. But this is true of the Apostles above all others, and therefore it is said : " Ye shall be Baptized with the Holy Ghost."

That these disciples rightly understood this saying of their Lord is shewn by their question, which is so far from being, as is commonly supposed, a proof of their having misunderstood their Master's words, that on the contrary it is a sign that they had formed a correct notion of them. First of all they see clearly that the Lord Himself, (although, as we have seen, He had only slightly hinted the fact,) was to be the active cause in the great event which He had announced. For, when they ask whether He intends to do this or that at the time in question, they evidently take it for granted, that He is the author of that which He has already announced as about to happen at the moment spoken of. By the promise of the communication of the Spirit they were especially reminded of the Kingdom of Israel. It is indeed well known that in the prophecies of the Old Testament allusions are made at great length, and with constant recurrence, to the restoration of

the kingdom of David and of the temporal power and grandeur of the people of Israel. And the disciples were the more readily put in mind of these promises since the announcement of the gift of the Holy Ghost was associated with a reference to the promise of the Father. Now the disciples evidently assume, that the gift of the Holy Ghost is something distinct from the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel. For it is evidently a mistake on Schneckenburger's part (ubi supra p. 196) when he says that the Apostles erroneously supposed, that their Baptism with the Spirit would be the καθιςάνειν τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραήλ. For if they identified these two events, how ever could they have made any question as to the identity of the time? Those devices which are so much in vogue with modern commentators, and by which these promises concerning the kingdom and the people are explained away as referring to a spiritual kingdom, and a community of saints, were therefore entirely unknown to the Apostles. Their honest and child-like minds clung to the what and the how that the Prophets had written of. In truth the question might possibly have appeared to them to follow of itself, and yet, to us, be superfluous. For the Prophets describe the restoration of the external power and splendour of Israel as a necessary consequence of its inward conversion to God. But the utter fruitlessness and vanity of all external might and glory in Israel—which may now have been perceived by the Apostles; and on the other hand the omnipotence of the Spirit in Jesus, which before this they were not so sensible of, as well as His impressive discourse on the great need of the Spirit, induced them to dwell in thought on the subject of the gift of the Holy Ghost. They already distinctly feel that the communication of the Spirit would be the necessary, hidden, internal principle that was to shape all the Future. Further, they were firmly convinced that this fundamental gift of the Spirit would pass on to manifest itself in the external world, and indeed in conformity with the promised forms; but still it became a question with them, whether they were to expect this development to be as rapid, as according to the Prophets it would appear to be. That in this sense the question we are treating of might occur to the Apostles, is easily accounted for by their peculiar line of thought. But that the idea of the exclusion of the Gentiles, as consequent on the restoration of

Israel, should have arisen in their minds—an idea, moreover, which is by no means involved in the question, is not at all conceivable. And yet not only Meyer (in locum), but even Schneckenburger (ubi supra) is disposed to ascribe such narrow-mindedness to the Apostles. There was yet another case possible with them: the very same motive which impelled them to put the question might also have moved them to maintain a total silence. The announcement: "Ye shall, not many days hence, be baptized with the Holy Ghost" might have directed all their thoughts and feelings inwardly and upon themselves in such a manner as positively to leave no room for other reflections. And this was evidently the intention of their Lord; and it is only with this view, that He turns off the question put to Him by His disciples. He does not by any means, as Meyer asserts, entirely put it aside; though He does leave the real subject matter of their question—the restoration, viz., of the kingdom to Israel—unnoticed; or rather, as Olshausen and De Wette remark, admits it. For, as Bengel observes, no less briefly than forcibly: Res ipsa firma est; alias nullum ejus esset tempus.

Now, since the Lord, in His reply to the question of His Apostles, speaks of æras and epochs (*χρόνοι καὶ καιροὶ*, cf. Harless zum Briefe an die Epheser, S. 40.) He at once makes it evident that the restoration of the kingdom of Israel is not for a moment to be thought of as simultaneous with the communication of the Spirit. For, while the gift of the Holy Ghost is to take place at once—"not many days hence;" the restoration of the kingdom to Israel is, by this allusion to times and seasons, removed quite indefinitely into the distant future. Moreover, the times and seasons which the Father, in the exercise of His own power, has appointed, refer to the general condition of the world, with which the external form and manifestation of the kingdom of the Spirit is closely connected (see Dan. ii. 21, vii. 12.) With regard, therefore, to the restoration of the Kingdom, reference is made to a perfectly different province from that, to which the immediate subject of our consideration belongs. So far, consequently, the answer does assume a negative tone; and, when the Disciples had learned that the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel is dependent on the development of those periods in the world's universal history, which are placed under the exclusive control and sove-

reignty of God, they must have concluded that the times of the kingdoms of the world which the Old Testament revelations had closely described, were to be allowed to run their course unhindered. Accordingly, the thought must thus have been awakened in the minds of the Apostles, that the immediate duty, which lay upon them, was to give themselves up entirely to the promise they had received of the communication of the Spirit. And, in order to impress this the more strongly upon them, and, still further to remove from their minds all thought of the fulfilment of the Kingdom of Israel, Jesus, with reference to its accomplishment, leads their thoughts away from Himself to the absolute might and government of the Father.

Having, therefore, in this way put aside the collateral idea of the restoration of Israel which intruded itself so forcibly on the minds of His disciples, Jesus returns once more expressly to the subject of the gift of the Spirit, and sets it forth with an especial application to the Apostles (ver. 8.) He here describes the coming of the Holy Ghost by its effect. This effect is power. For he does not say, as Luther translates it, "you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost," but "you shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." This implies two things: first, that power was as yet wanting to them; secondly, that the Holy Ghost is the only source of that power. By this term the Lord touched the inmost conscience of His disciples. For the experience of all within the last few days must have been such as to convince them that in every respect, both in knowledge and in will, all had been wanting in power; and in this, the saddest experience of their lives, is reflected the experience of the whole people of Israel. For sad indeed had been the end to which all the majesty of Israel had come. And wherefore? They stood in need of an all-pervading power, and such they had not. Because the people were like grass; because the people were flesh (Isai. xl. 7), and therefore were without that Spirit in whom alone power dwells (Isai. xxxiv. 3; Zech. iv. 6.) And, the more humiliating this recollection of their own weakness, and of the weakness of the whole nation, must have been for the disciples, the more inspiriting would be the promise of the speedy coming of the Holy Ghost. And corresponding to this announcement of the Spirit as the sole source of power is the

allusion to those labours for the sake of which this power was to be bestowed. As the Holy Ghost is the only source of power—as all Israel, therefore, and the whole heathen world, without the Spirit is sunk into the most profound weakness, so not only in Israel, but also in all Heathendom, there exists an extreme poverty of the Spirit. But the gift of the Spirit proceeds from the glorified Jesus, and is dependent on a fitness for its reception in man's inner nature. And since this qualification can be no longer effected by the visible presence of Jesus, therefore the place of His presence is to be supplied by His testimony in the word and life of His messengers illuminated by His Holy Spirit. Thus, therefore, they to whom is given the promise of a power untiring, invincible, and conscious of its object, have pointed out to to them the path they will have to follow from its beginning to its end.

Here too the starting-point is Jerusalem. This city, therefore, is not only to be the spot on which the Holy Ghost is to be received, but also the first point where the Spirit is to begin its operations in order to the communication of itself. But that it is chiefly for the sake of the people, that the city receives this distinction, is shewn by what is further stated with regard to the course of the testimony itself. For the next place that is named for the receiving of this testimony is the whole of Judea, as the land of the Jewish people; and if Samaria follows, this also is for the same reason. For Samaria forms the connecting link between Israel and the Gentiles; since its inhabitants were Gentiles who not only dwelt in the midst of the Jewish people, but who also from the very commencement of their sojourning there had accommodated themselves in many ways to the customs of Israel. (See 2 Kings xvii. 24—41.) And this very turn of the discourse must also have raised in the minds of the Apostles the idea, that the promised gift of the Spirit was not to be a sudden and merely transitory starting-point, which would quickly return again into its hidden source before its first given impulse attained to its full effect; as, from the way in which it is spoken of in the Old Testament, they might have been disposed to conjecture, but that the course it was destined to run upon earth was much longer. And thereby the nature of the Spirit and the kingdom would naturally be brought before their minds in its distinct individuality and difference from all previous phenomena.

By the Lord's comprehensive and definitive instructions concerning the Kingdom of God (ver. 3), and especially by His last conversation, the Apostles were sufficiently prepared to understand the closing act of their Master's earthly existence especially in its prophetic import. For the vivid description of the Ascension of Jesus immediately follows (vv. 9—11.) Now, while at the very outset of our history (ver. 2), the taking up of Jesus is spoken of as the close of His initiatory labours, so here likewise this event is set forth in its great importance relatively to their further continuance. For therewith that exalted position, which is peculiar to this second period of His labours, is definitely and distinctly described. So much less cause is there for our wondering, that this very fact should be prominently brought before us in a passage, which is designed to enable us to enter into a correct view of the second operations of Jesus. Now, first of all, it is evident, as Meyer has justly remarked, that two elements are to be noticed in this fact of the Ascension; on the one hand, the Ascension itself from the earth, which was clearly accomplished without the aid of any outward means; and the appearance of the cloud which received Him on high. The fact that Jesus was taken up without any external instrumentality, is a proof that the extraordinary and typical events which terminated the career of Enoch and of Elias are to be regarded as receiving here their historical development. While those translations were designed to prefigure and to demonstrate, that human nature is capable of deliverance from the trammels of earth, and of exaltation to that heavenly freedom and majesty, after which it so ardently aspires; here we are led to see how the same nature, by its own deeds and its own sufferings, has actually wrought for itself the same deliverance and exaltation. The Apostles had already seen the body of the Lord glorified on the mountain. What was then made clear to them by the Transfiguration was that He was, as declared, the Son in whom the Father was well-pleased; who had never done the will of the flesh, or of the tempter, but whose meat it had ever been to do the will of God. (John vi. 34.) After His resurrection they had discerned, that His whole condition was no longer that of the common finiteness of humanity; thereat they could now no longer marvel, for He had, they knew, triumphed over death and the grave. When, therefore, in the morn-

ing, Jesus went from Jerusalem, and ascended the mount, and from thence was taken up on high—all this must have appeared to His disciples as a natural consequence of all His previous history. Under this point of view, the Ascension of Jesus from earth to heaven is in this passage twice spoken of as a πορεύεσθαι· (ver. 10, 11) a term which is elsewhere employed to signify an ordinary removing from one place to another. And is not the mention also of the cloud in perfect consistency therewith? The circumstance, that the cloud from the higher region receives Him who was taken up from the earth, and bears Him onwards, marks the Ascension as slow and gradual. And the very description is evidently calculated to familiarize us with this impression. We are told that the first ascension from the earth took place while the disciples beheld, and that, after that, they followed and accompanied His ascension into the cloud, until He disappeared from their eyes; and that they then remained involuntarily gazing up into the heavens which had received Him out of their sight.

Precisely therefore as the gulf between Heaven and earth was in this wise not passed over by any sudden act, but traversed in a calm and visible continuity, so the past earthly existence and labours of Jesus were by no means cast off or even put aside; they were retained as an abiding eternal foundation, and glorified with heavenly light. What, therefore, had been begun and founded by His earthly past, was not left behind or abandoned because of the Ascension; but as surely as the body of Jesus was deemed worthy of a free and heavenly form of existence, it also must become capable of partaking of an exalted power and a higher life. While, therefore, the going up of Elias may be compared to the flight of a bird which none can follow, the ascension of Christ is as it were a bridge between Heaven and earth, laid down for all who are drawn to Him by His earthly existence. This bridging over of the gulf between earth and Heaven had been brought before the view of the disciples from the very beginning (John i. 52); and by this passage also, we may perhaps explain the fact, that after the ascension the disciples are immediately joined by two heavenly messengers who are spoken of as men, (vv. 10, 11.) For it is only in agreement with the fact that Jesus, Who had lived with men as their equal, is

now exalted into heaven, if messengers descending from the height of heaven stand and speak with the Apostles as their fellows.

Since, therefore, the Ascension of Jesus is not to be looked upon as a withdrawal from His people and from His work, but rather as a higher kind of communion with them, we may then ask: what is the nature of this communion, and how, as contemplated by the light of the Ascension, must it have appeared to the Apostles who had been prepared for it? The Ascension had translated Jesus into the seat of unlimited power and dominion (see Ps. ciii. 19). As from the beginning he had declared Himself to be King and Lord, the Ascension must be His sitting on the throne of His glory. But if He is set down on His throne, then His kingdom must be already prepared for Him. But His Kingdom is that Kingdom of God which had been the sum and substance of all His teaching. Since then He has set up His throne in Heaven in the sight of His disciples, this Kingdom of God appears to be a Kingdom of Heaven. The idea and expression of a Kingdom of Heaven had, it is true, been familiar enough to His disciples ever since the times of the Baptist; but evidently they had never before gained such an insight into the nature of this kingdom as they had now attained to. He who, after countless miracles in the earlier times, had in these latter days, by the ratifying word of Scripture, proved Himself to them to be the Anointed King in the Kingdom of God, (Luke xxiv. 44—47; Acts i. 3,) is seen by them ascending into the heavens, and taking possession of this heavenly throne. His kingdom must begin, and that too upon earth. For His Ascension has glorified His earthly life—nay, more, it must even begin among men; for His passing into the heavens has made His earthly nature participant in the divine glory. And to this point the original signification of the Kingdom of Christ must have led the minds of the disciples. The designation of the Kingdom of Heaven belongs indeed to the Old Testament, and originally arose as soon as the Kingdom of God first ceased to have a representative in Israel, because the kingdom of this world had filled the whole earth. At this period the Kingdom of Heaven was described as the kingdom of secret power which works downwards from above, and irreparably destroys the king-

doms of the world in order itself to take their place (Dan. ii. 44, 45; vii. 12—14). This idea and expression of a Kingdom of Heaven attains now to its realization. The kingdom begins as soon as the King is seated on His throne; and it is that which is now brought before our view, (comp. Schneckenburger. *Ueber den Zweck der Apostelgeschichte*). In what then does the government of this heavenly King manifest itself? Human affairs are, essentially, still in the same condition they were in the days of Daniel. For as the world was then in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, so is it now in those of the Emperor of Rome (see Luke ii. 1). As long, therefore, as the times and seasons allotted for the kingdoms of this world continue (ver. 7), there is no room for the setting up and manifestation of God's kingdom on earth. Has then the Kingdom of God no realization upon earth? Most unquestionably it has. There is in truth a region over which the kingdom of the world possesses no power: and this is the domain of the Spirit. And we have already seen both that in this domain lies the only eternal foundation of all true shaping and external manifestation of the Kingdom of God, and also that now the time of that kingdom is arrived. Thus does the withdrawal of Jesus into the depths of heaven consist with His influence and operation in the depths of Spirit on earth. True it is, man is not spirit. A corporeal element is also essential to his existence. On this account, while the disciples are gazing up with longing eyes into the depth of heaven, a consolation is brought to them from thence: He shall come again, and they shall see Him, even in like manner as He had gone up. Now, as the invisible working of the Spirit corresponds to the enthroning of Jesus in the hidden depths of heaven, so also will the second advent be the moment of the manifestation of all that shall have been effected by the Spirit—or the moment of the setting up again of the kingdom of God in its earthly visibility. Thus then does the question of the disciples in ver. 6, receive also its positive answer. For surely, after all that had preceded, it could not be a question with them, that the visible coming of Jesus should be the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. Accordingly the Ascension of Jesus is an experience which floated indelibly, and never to be forgotten before their spiritual vision. It transfigures at one glance all the time of their inti-

macy with Jesus; it opens to them the future at one stroke, as well when they look to what they have to do as when they ask what they have to hope; and as St Luke composes his introductory words under this impression, he affords at one glance the most sublime prospect into the whole course of the following events. At the very beginning, he places the book before us in contrast with his earlier narrative, which recounted those earlier labours which had laid the foundation of this kingdom. We accordingly draw therefrom the conclusion, that it is his purpose in this second narrative to set forth the further labours of the same Jesus. And now not merely has this conclusion been confirmed to our minds, but in the same way as St Luke has distinctly and clearly described to us the earlier period of the ministry of Jesus, so have we obtained from him a very vivid exposition of the operations which he is about to narrate. We have also received an intimation regarding the final goal of His heavenly influence, just as the limit of His earthly labours was pointed out to us. Accordingly we shall be justified in drawing the conclusion that the second narrative will, like the first, be carried on to a definite end, so that, even though this close may not coincide with that limit itself, it will, nevertheless, when compared with that limitation, stand forth as a preliminary conclusion.

All that we have now to do is, by a review of the book itself, to shew that we have formed a right conception of the view which is here opened out to us—in other words, that the Ascended Jesus is properly the active subject of the following history. In fact, as even Schneckenburger has already pointed out (ibid. p. 198), Jesus as the King and Lord proclaimed and enthroned, appears, on all suitable occasions of the narrative before us, as the ruler and judge in the ultimate and supreme resort. He it is, for instance, who again appoints the twelfth witness (i. 24); who, after He himself has received the Spirit, sends Him down from on high on His church (ii. 33); who adds to His church in Jerusalem (ii. 47); He, too, during the first days of the church, is ever near His people Israel to bless them in turning them away from their iniquities; He it is who works miracles, both of healing and destruction, in testimony to His Apostles' preaching (iii. 6; iv. 10, 30; ix. 34; xiii. 11; xiv. 3; xix. 13); to His

dying martyr Stephen He reveals Himself standing at the right hand of God (vii. 55, 56); His angel speaks unto Philip (viii. 26); it is His Spirit that caught him away (viii. 39.); He appears to Saul of Tarsus (xix. 5, 27; xxii. 8, 26); His hand established the first church among the Gentiles (xi. 21); His angel delivers St Peter (xii. 7, 11, 17); His angel strikes the hostile Herod (xii. 23); He again it is who appears to St Paul in the temple, and commits to him the conversion of the Gentiles (xxii. 17, 21); to Him the Apostles and brethren address themselves on the occasion of the first mission to the Gentiles (xiii. 2, cf. v. 47); to Him are the infant churches commended (xiv. 23); His Spirit prevents the Apostolic missionaries from preaching in Bithynia (xvi. 7); He calls them by the voice of the man of Macedonia into Europe (xvi. 10); He opens the heart of Lydia and effects the first conversion in Europe (xvi. 14); He comforts and encourages Paul at Corinth (xviii. 9, 10); He strengthens him in prison and informs him of his journey to Rome (xxiii. 11). These interventions of Jesus, so numerous, express, and decisive, are a sufficient warrant for our regarding His Ascension as essentially His really setting on His throne. We are, therefore, fully justified in ascribing all to His influence, even in those instances where, without any express mention of His name, we are referred to the invisible world. In this way, therefore, we must consider the conversion of the Samaritans by miracles (viii. 6—12); the restoration to life of Tabitha (ix. 36—42); the vision of St Peter (x. 10—16). And in like manner in those passages, also, where the Holy Ghost is spoken of as the efficient cause (as *e.g.* xiii. 2), we must bring before our minds the Lord Himself; for the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, cf. xvi. 6, 7; and also, in every mention of the name of God, as at xxvii. 23, we are to understand the person of Jesus, for, from i. 22, iv. 30, we learn that God works by Him.

With regard now to the close of the book, not only does the result of our consideration of its contents quite spontaneously lead us to the same view, but also when judged of by the standard of the Prospect afforded us, it will be found to be consistent with the nature of the case. At present it will, perhaps, be sufficient to call attention to the fact, that, here and there, the opinion has already been advanced, that as Jerusalem is pointed

out for the starting point of the preaching of Christianity, so Rome may very justly be looked upon as the goal (see Mayerhoff. Einleitung in die petrinischen Schriften, § 5; Schneckenburger Zweck d. Apostg. S. 48). No attempt, however, has been made to adduce any support for this opinion from the body of Biblical statements, and therefore Bleek (see Studien u. Kritiken, 1836, 1023—1025) may, without much trouble, make objections to it, and Zeller may find it easy to reject such a notion as an absurdity (see Theol. Jahrb. 1850. 311). The only one who has advanced this view in that connexion in which alone it can have any foundation or significance is Hofmann (see Weissag, u. Erfullg. ii. 211).

Since then, to our minds, it is clearly established, that the author of the Apostolical history places his readers from the very beginning at the highest possible point of view; we cannot here avoid the remark, how very imperfect and defective is the idea which is commonly entertained of this book. Its ancient and traditional title even appears calculated to lower materially our sense of the high conception which St Luke had formed of his task. And in the same proportion as the view propounded by Grotius (according to which it brings before us simply the labours of St Peter and St Paul), is still narrower, so in the same degree is it remote from St Luke's idea. It is, however, impossible to conceive of or advance anything more directly opposed to the divine position which St Luke takes up in his whole treatment of this book than the procedure of the Tubingen critics, according to whom the active personages in the Apostolical history are represented in it, not only as men entirely devoid of any divine influence or operation, but as even party-leaders acting under conscious deception. But such a view even as that of Schneckenburger's, with all its correctness of remark on several points of detail is, nevertheless, when compared with the light here opened out, both meagre and narrow, and therefore at once to be rejected. Moreover that of Thiersch, (see his Herstellung d. historischen Standpunctes u. s. w. S. 173), who thinks that he can discern at the close of the book a coldness with regard to its subject, and an indifference to the ultimate fate of the Apostle St Paul; (even if we must not suppose that the breaking off of the narrative at its close had a sudden and exter-

nal cause), comes far short of the height to which our author had therein raised himself. It is from this height that we arrive at the simplest explanation of the fact that St Luke did not deem it necessary to thrust himself upon our notice during the course of his history.

§ 2. THE LAST PREPARATION.

(Chap. i. 12—26.)

The introduction to our work led us to the conclusion, that we are not to regard the present section as the proper beginning of the intended historical narrative. It was, we saw, intimated that the starting point of the new series of developments was to be the receiving of the Holy Ghost (see vv. 5—8). Since, then, this momentous epoch does not fall within the section before us, we must, therefore, look upon the matters which are recounted in it, as still preliminary to the proper opening. And, accordingly, if it is in any case to be regarded as an integral part of our work, it cannot well bring before us aught but preparatory matters; and since the whole influence of Jesus on His disciples had been a preparation of them for receiving the Holy Ghost, these matters must be regarded as forming their final preparation.

As the transition is made by mention of the place of the Ascension (see ver. 12) we are once more placed before the prospect opened out to us. Whereas the Gospel mentioned Bethany as the spot from whence He ascended (xxiv. 50) the same author in the present passage names the Mount of Olives as the locality of the same event. Now, as even Zeller (see Theolog. Jahrb. 1849 p. 7) does not consider this discrepancy to be of any importance, we shall the more readily gain a hearing, if here, also, we allude to the difference in the point of view already suggested from which the Gospel and the History of the Apostles regard the close of the earthly life of Jesus. As, for instance, Bethany is spoken of as the scene of the Ascension, we are consequently carried back to the earlier period of the earthly existence of Jesus, when most He loved to resort to this locality (see Luke xi. 38, 42; John xi., xii. 1; Mark xi. 11, 12); while, on the other hand, the further mention of Olivet, no less than generally the whole

description of the going up to Heaven as given in the Apostolic History, leads our thoughts onwards to the future. When Ezekiel saw the glory of Jehovah ascending and departing from the temple at Jerusalem, he tells us that it again descended and stood awhile on the mountain on the east side of Jerusalem (see Ezek. xi. 23). It was, therefore, a withdrawal of the divine glory, and yet a continuance of it in the neighbourhood. Jehovah's external protection and blessing may have been withdrawn from His people, but still the invisible power of the Spirit will remain near them, and probably manifest itself the more gloriously on that account. It is in truth the same prophet who subsequently has set forth this aspect of promise and hope, which existed even in spite of the withdrawal of Jehovah's glory to a distance—it is even Ezekiel who has discerned, set forth, and described in the most touching manner the quickening and awakening power of the Spirit of Jehovah on the whole people (see xxxvii.) In a similar way Jesus, in whom the divine glory resides bodily, withdraws Himself from the Jews (see John viii. 21); but His standing on the Mount of Olives, on the east side of Jerusalem, is a sign that though invisible He is still near them to bless them (see iii. 26). But this mountain is expressly mentioned by name in another prophetic passage, even still more significantly. In the final conflict with the heathens, Zechariah sees Jehovah standing on the Mount of Olives (see Zech. xiv. 4.) But this battle is the appointed moment when Jehovah will again mingle with His people in the same way that He had done in the earlier days —*i.e.* in external and visible glory. The Mount of Olives, therefore, in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, is to be the spot of His final and grandest Revelation in the face of the Gentiles, and of His own people, Israel. And precisely because this very mount is destined to be the scene of His supreme Glory did Jesus, after the type of David, suffer thereon His greatest humiliation (see 2 Sam. xvi. 30—32). The prophetic declarations therefore of the Heavenly messengers, concerning the coming again of Christ, is closely connected with the prophetic locality of the Ascension. We venture to trust the more confidently to this hint of interpretation, since the Jews themselves, purely because of the prophetic passages, and quite independently of the evangelical history, recognize the great significance of this mountain

(see Schottgen Horæ Talmud. in loc). In addition, therefore, to the fact that the very mention of the Mount of Olives, in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, brings yet once more before us that prospect into the great future, which is here intended to be opened out, Jerusalem is now again for the third time, and in a third relation, pointed out to us as the consecrated and hallowed starting point of the salvation of God.

The last preparation then for the great approaching future is partly of a general, and partly of a particular nature. It has already been shown, that the Apostles did not receive the final promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost with that deep inwardness of feeling and with that simplicity which was due to it. In the meantime, however, their thoughts, thus habitually wandering away to the outward shape of the Kingdom of God, are brought back again into the right path. On the other hand, the importance of the gift of the Holy Ghost, both as regarded themselves, and also the whole of the immediate future, is brought home far more clearly to their minds both by the words of their Lord and by the fact of His Ascension. Of this it is a necessary consequence, that henceforwards their thoughts are turned entirely inwards. They recognize and feel their own weakness and impotency, which, in the day of trial, (see Luke xxii. 31, 32), had become so sensibly manifest to them. And in the bitter consciousness of their own poverty their whole mind yearns after that fulness of the Spirit, which it had been promised to them that they should receive within not many days hence. Their whole soul was absorbed in prayer (ver. 14). In this tone and tendency of mind, the Apostles gather together all those persons in Jerusalem who with them believed on the Lord, that is, the whole company of one hundred and twenty souls among whom, besides the Apostles, special mention is made of Mary the mother of Jesus and of His previously unbelieving brethren (see John vii. 5). Now, since in 1 Cor. xv. 6, as many as five hundred believers are mentioned, the company here spoken of is therefore a selection. We must suppose that that greater number were to be found in Galilee; and we must assume, that it was very far from all that returned immediately to Jerusalem. Still we may with good reason conclude, that they did not absent themselves from the assembly of the believers in Jerusalem on

the Feast of Pentecost. And thus the difficulty raised by De Wette (in loc.) is at once removed. The whole body of the most zealous disciples henceforward regularly meet together in a fixed spot in Jerusalem, as they had been enjoined (ver. 4), and continued stedfast with one accord in prayer.

Besides these general preparatory exercises, one especial act, belonging to the period here described, is recounted to us with singular particularity of detail, which likewise bears the character of a final preparation. The Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and the communication of power from on High is, it is true, equally necessary for the whole body of the disciples, as indeed each of them feels his inward need of it, and they all with one accord pray for such inmost and deepest satisfaction; but we are clearly led to expect, that this communication of the Spirit is to be at first confined to a narrow sphere, as indeed the fitness for its reception extended only to a number easy to enumerate; then, however, it is further to be presumed, the gift of the Spirit is to spread itself from this its first starting-point. And the Apostles were, from the very first, ordained for this work of diffusing it. Our Lord had therefore himself intimated, that the Apostles, by the coming of the Holy Ghost, should receive power to carry the testimony of Jesus even to the ends of the world (see ver. 8). And it is this intimation that explains the fact why, in the very front of the narrative here beginning, the names of the Apostles are preliminarily mentioned (ver. 13). But now twelve, as the number of the Apostles, possesses from the very first an unmistakeable reference to Israel. Their destination is first of all to renew Israel, and also to stand at the head of this renewed Israel in the same manner as the twelve sons of Jacob did at the head of the old Israel (see Matt. x. 5; Luke xxii. 30). That this, the original, destination of the Apostles, is even now still the same, is made clear by the significant prominence given to Jerusalem and to Israel with direct reference to this work of the testimony (see ver. 8). But if this is really the case, then the incompleteness of their number, occasioned by the falling away of Judas, must be regarded as a defect. The disciples were most thoroughly convinced, that the Apostolate had not by any means attained as yet to its full realisation. On the contrary, they were conscious, that the communication of the Holy Spirit

would confer on them the power to fulfil their vocation as Apostles. Accordingly the matter stood thus: Twelve as the number of the Apostles fixed and chosen by the Lord himself, must remain for ever essentially broken in upon and revoked, or else the gap which had arisen in their number must be filled up before the Holy Ghost is communicated. Since to the Apostles the former was a thing intolerable to be thought of—since they also knew that the Lord had chosen them to be the instruments of His operations on earth, they therefore take courage and undertake to complete the Apostolical number. Peter makes the proposition, and the whole assembly proceeds to co-operate in its accomplishment.

For our historical purpose, it is of importance to examine in what way the conviction of the necessity of this procedure was established in their minds. It becomes indeed directly obvious, that the necessary confidence for acting for the first time, and in so grave a matter, on their own responsibility, is derived by the Apostles simply from the Scriptures. Peter twice speaks of a necessity (ver. 16, 20); in the one case he is alluding to the past; in the second to the future. On both occasions, however, he deduces this necessity from the Scriptures. In the end of Judas he recognizes the already accomplished fulfilment of a passage of Holy Writ. Much offence has been taken at the circumstance that Peter should have narrated to the assembly the end of Judas, which must have been sufficiently well known to them. But in these objections it is entirely overlooked, that the narrative before us takes quite a peculiar view of this event, and that this peculiar view is nothing less than the chief point. Hofmann was the first to remark, with perfect truth, that, according to the passage before us, Judas must have met with his unhappy end in the very field which he bought with the price of blood, (see Weissag. u. Erfull. ii. 131—134.) This fact Peter has before his eye, and he sees in this apparently accidental and external coincidence the evident and palpable dispensation of Divine justice. Judas, with the other Apostles, had received an inheritance, namely, his ministry, and, as Peter calls it, Apostleship. But this Spiritual inheritance satisfied him not; his desires were all directed towards money (cf. John xii. 6). Now, though thus highly commissioned and mightily endowed, he has, in fact,

received the gratification of his heart's desires; the Spiritual inheritance, which was a burden to him, has been taken from him, and he has received for it not merely money—but a real substitute for that inheritance—an actual piece of land, such as corresponded to his wishes. He has taken possession of a piece of land in a proper sense, since it was in it that he cast himself down headlong. Moreover, this field has its name as much from the blood of the betrayer as from the innocent blood of His Lord (see Matt. xxvii. 8). And where is this field? Peter does not bring the locality more distinctly before us. It was one that witnessed so loudly to itself that there was no need of any further remark, whenever the current of thought on this event followed the course indicated by Peter. Matthew, for instance, remarks that the piece of ground "bought for the thirty pieces of silver" was the Potter's Field (see xxvii. 7). Rightly, therefore, has Hofmann (Weissag. u. Erfull. ii. 124) as also Hengstenberg before him (see Christolog. ii. 250) seen therein an allusion to Jerem. xviii. 1. For the perfectly unsupported protestation against it by Winer (Biblisch Reallexicon i. 188 3te Aufl.) may well be left unnoticed. Thereby, however, we are referred to the locality of Tophet (see Jer. xix. 6), and to the Valley of Hinnom (see Jer. xix. 26); to both of which names a stain of abominable impurity had of old been attached (see 2 Kings xxiii. 10); and at a later date the curse of the Lord was laid on these places by the word of the prophets Jeremiah and Zechariah (see Jer. xix. 6; Zech. xi. 13). With regard, however, to the times of the New Testament, Lightfoot thus writes (see Works ii. 200) of this locality: sub templo secundo cum evanuerant ea, quæ æternam infamiam huic loco inusserunt, remansit tamen tantum fœditatis atque abominandi nominis ut etiam jam ad vivum repræsentationem orci aeque præ se ferret ac olim." This horror and dread of the Valley of Hinnom is, as is well known, the origin of the New Testament use of the word γέεννα.

Since then the place which Judas covered with his body "burst asunder" was in this accursed region, we have in this external circumstance the judgment of the Almighty and Holy One revealed in a most terrific manner. Now, we also see, that as soon as Peter had delivered his opinion regarding the end of Judas, it is adopted by the whole assembly. For all

present call the death of the traitor "a going to his own place" (ver. 25). Thus the very spot, which he had purchased with his sinful gains in this terrible region of the curse, and has covered with his corpse, was named his home and dwelling-place. While Ahitophel, the natural type of Judas, (see Hofmann. Weissag. u. Erfull. 2. 133) met with an ignominious death (as it is circumstantially narrated to us in 2 Sam. xvii. 23) in his natural home, and in the inheritance of his fathers, so a similar destiny was assigned to Judas. The scene of his fearful end is, as it were, prepared for him beforehand, and now also by purchase, and by taking possession, has become actually his own, and therefore in all propriety is to be held to be his spiritual home and inheritance.

Of necessity it was so contrived that such a palpable display of the Divine retribution should be the first object to which the Apostles had to direct their attention in order to take their step in independent action. It was at once clear to Peter, and all the rest, that in this event there lay before them an act of retributive justice which was to be looked upon as the verification and accomplishment of the fearful curse which David, as the Lord's anointed, the Christ of the Old Testament, had imprecated on his enemies. Thus then the divine necessity of this event will, with perfect certainty, be discovered in the words of Ps. lxix. ver. 26. But that we must also refer to another Psalm of David's—the cix., is obvious; for this Psalm is even the one which paints in words the curse in all its breadth and depth, exactly as we find it actually realized in the fearful end of Judas. But now in this Psalm we find a statement as to what was to be done with that which had been officially entrusted to the accursed one—"*his office*"—which interpretation of פְּקֻדָּה—in any case well supported, seems to me to be established by the context to which Maurer and Hofmann appeal in behalf of a different exposition. "His office," it runs, "let another take" (ver. 8). This passage of Scripture confirms to the disciples the conviction, otherwise pressing upon them, that another ought to be installed in the Apostolical office of Judas, and that they themselves were in duty bound, forthwith to devise the means for its accomplishment.

Since now we have seen, that the Apostles did not proceed to their work of independent action, until they had assured them-

selves that there was Scriptural warrant for it; it is incumbent on us to consider the significant prominence which the body of the believers holds in this preparatory act. It is true that it is the great importance and paramount necessity of the Apostolical office that, on this occasion, makes itself first of all and immediately noticeable; but just as little can we overlook the high significance which on the same occasion is ascribed to the assembly in its collective character. In the first place it ought not to be overlooked, that Peter does not bring the matter before the Apostles, for them to consider and to determine upon it, but that he stood up in the midst of all the disciples, and it is precisely upon this occasion that the number (one hundred and twenty) is given as of all the *names* (ver. 15)—an expression very proper to set forth the equal character of all present, and the absence of all distinction among them. This collective body consequently is the active subject of the three actions ἔστησαν, ver. 23, εἶπον, ver. 24, and ἔδωκαν, ver. 24. We have therefore to assume that the assembly, upon being convinced by the discourse of Peter as resting not merely on his personal authority but on that of the word of God as universally received, proceeded to action. It is true that the matter was finally determined by lot, and the ultimate decision thereby left to the Lord himself (see Prov. xvi. 33.) But surely it is wholly without reason, if Olshausen sees in this employment of the lot an authority for the use of it on similar occasions; for the instance which we are now considering is so peculiar that I cannot conceive of the possibility of any analogous case. For if any element in the idea of an Apostle is clear and well established, it is that of his having been chosen by the Lord himself (see Luke vi. 13; John vi. 70, xiii. 18, xv. 16, 19; Acts i. 2). Indeed the assembly is so firmly convinced of this prerogative of the Lord in the appointment of an Apostle, that they considered the choice of the Lord to have been made already (ὃν ἐξελέξω, ver. 24); so that the lot is only the manifestation of this act of the Lord which, though secret to them, was already concluded. If therefore, on the one hand, nothing is involved in the case of the lot but a correct recognition of the limits, which separate the rights of the body of believers from the prerogative of the Lord, so, on the other, it is apparent that in their independent action the assembly proceeds to the very verge of those limits.

If, for instance, Peter sets it up in the foreground as a necessary qualification of all who were to be considered in the election of an Apostle, that they must have been in daily intercourse with their Lord during the whole of His public ministry (see De Wette on ver. 21), this appears simple enough, and quite conformable to the facts; but that it is not removed beyond all doubt is shown by Olshausen's striking remarks. From the silence, however, of the assembly, it follows that they recognized this criterion as a just one. It is obvious that thereby a great step was taken in the matter in question. The next important step was the appointing two—an act which is expressly assigned to the collective body of the assembly. This appointment was naturally based on the application of the general criterion to those persons whose claims to the office were to be considered. But it is obvious that there was much besides to be taken into consideration. When then finally not more than two were found, and set forth as, worthy of consideration, the matter had been brought to the point at which the assembly could proceed no further of itself, and without trenching on the prerogatives of the Lord, as Bengel remarks: huc pervenire poterant fideles consilio, non ultra; ideo hic demum incipit sors. The assembly here holds back. Still this holding back is not a negative act; but the whole body addresses itself in prayer to their Ascended Lord (see Olshausen) and intreats Him to intimate the object of His choice. But even therewith the active share of the assembly in the election does not terminate. They might indeed have waited for a miraculous sign from on High; but having once arrived at the conviction that it was incumbent on them to take part in the filling up of the vacancy which had arisen, so at this point supported also by the authority of Scripture, they betake themselves to the casting of lots. Now Peter, in that he designates the Apostolical office as a κλῆρος, ver. 17, evidently regards this office as the spiritual antitype of the share of the twelve tribes in the land of Canaan under the Old Covenant (see Schleusner) s. v. κλῆρος[1]—a comparison in which he must have felt confirmed by all that was symbolical in the end of Judas. Now this would immediately suggest, that in order to

[1] Even this phraseology, though evidently one which immediately suggested itself, has been left, altogether unnoticed by Walch in his Dissertatio de munere Apostolico, p. 6.

ascertain the will of the Lord, with regard to the bestowal of the portion thus left vacant, it would be right to employ the same means as, in the Old Testament, Israel had been commanded to use for a similar purpose (see Numb. xxvi. 52—56). The parallel is in fact more complete than it appears at first sight. For even the other aspect of the matter, according to which the decision is carried so far on the part of man that only the final resolve is reserved to the Lord, has its analogy in the History of the Old Testament (see Theol. comment. z. A. T. 1, 2, S. 383, 384).

When now it is said that Matthias thus chosen was numbered with the eleven in the Apostolic Body, we have clearly to understand thereby a formal and solemn manner of reception into the Apostolical college, so that by this final act the seal of certain conviction was stamped on the whole proceeding. And if, according to this, the Apostolical office is again brought prominently forward in this last preparatory act, still—what Rothe already (see Anfänge der Kirche S. 149) and Kist (die Christliche Kirche auf Erden S. 152) have called attention to, it does not escape he attentive observer, that in like manner the authority and importance both of the collective body and of the individual are maintained in a most remarkable manner within the first Christian community.

§ 3. FOUNDING AND MANIFESTATION OF THE CHURCH.

(Chap. ii. 1—13.)

It is not without reason, that with reference to the important event about to follow, at the very opening of this chapter, our attention is called to its chronology. The words ἐν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς πεντεκοστῆς imply a peculiarity of view, which we must endeavour to make clear to our minds if we would wish rightly to understand the expression.

In the first place we observe that πεντεκοστῆς is the "genitivus appositionis," and leads to the conclusion that πεντεκοστή is to be regarded as a term of definite meaning. This consideration carries

us naturally to the giving of the Law (Levit. xxiii. 15, &c., Deut. xvi. 9, &c.) From these passages it appears, that seven times seven, or seven weeks, were to be reckoned from the second day of the Passover—the day on which the first fruits were offered—then the following or fiftieth day (πεντεκοστή) was to be kept as a feast. With every new year, therefore, this period was given, and the actual flux of this time filled up this period. So then, according to this, the expression, Day of Pentecost, was primarily the verbal formula for the period which is filled up in each year by the actual arrival of the day. The day in and by itself, therefore, is not, as Meyer thinks, the period which is full so long as the day lasts; for how is it possible to speak already of the fullfilling of the day, when the third hour of that day was alone mentioned? (see ver. 15). Since then this peculiarity in the chronological statement refers us back to the Paschal Feast, we must, from the very beginning keep constantly in view the connexion between the following event and the Feast of Passover. To the disciples the last Passover had become for ever memorable by the death and resurrection of their Lord. On the day after the Paschal Lamb was slain, Jesus who, from the very first, had been pointed out to them as the Lamb of God (see John i. 36), had died a bloody death; and on the very day after that, on which the first fruits had been offered, Jesus, who a little before had spoken of Himself as a grain of corn (see John xii. 2, 4) had arisen from out of the bowels of the earth. He had himself told them that the great conversion would take place οὐ μετὰ πολλὰς ταύτας ἡμέρας (see i. 15). Thereby He had intimated that the current days were to be counted; and thereby also He referred to that reckoning of this interval which the Law had established, and which was observed by the Jews with especial solemnity (see Lundius, Jüdische Heiligthümer, S. 1017, 1018). We have moreover seen that, by the remarkable fate of Judas, the disciples had already been led to draw a parallel between the outward inheritance and possession of the land which, after every harvest, was appropriated anew among the people of Israel, and that spiritual blessing and inheritance which had been promised to them as the new Israel. It was therefore naturally to be expected, that the disciples should wait, with great excitement, for the arrival of that sacred epoch, which was to

be reckoned and calculated from the feast of the Passover, and the more so, as in this year the day of Pentecost coincided with the Sabbath. (See Wieseler Chronologie der Apostol. Zeitalt. S. 19.) If we are to suppose that the disciples spent the whole of this interval with one accord in prayer (see i. 14), then, after the chronological determination which precedes, we must, with regard to the words *ἦσαν ἅπαντες ὁμοθυμάδον ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό* understand them merely in an intensive signification, especially as it is exactly the hour of prayer that is here spoken of (see ver. 15, cf. Winer Reallexicon i. 378.) That under *ἅπαντες* we are in any case to comprise the one hundred and twenty names spoken of in ver. 15 is quite certain ; moreover, the opinion of Meyer is very probable that this band, which had been for some time residing in Jerusalem, had, during the time of the Feast, been joined by many other disciples, and especially from Galilee. Walch, indeed, in his treatise de conventibus Apostolorum, p. 15, 16, has advanced the supposition that the Apostles exclusively are here meant, but a simple reference to i. 14 is quite sufficient to refute this his perfectly isolated view.

The locality, however, of the event does not admit of being fixed as easily as the time. However, if we reflect, that the great event of the Pentecost took place at the first hour of prayer on the Feast day, the highest degree of probability will always be in favour of the inference, that the house in which the disciples were assembled (see ver. 2) belonged to the temple (see Wieseler ibid. 18, 19).

As regards now the proper event of this Festival, we must strictly and carefully keep distinct the reality and the appearance. We must not be led astray by the circumstance that the essence of this Pentecostal event is narrated in one single sentence ; since this sentence narrates a something extraordinary and perfectly new. The sentence is *καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν ἅπαντες πνεύματος ἁγίου* (ver. 4). At the first glance, indeed, this expression appears, in the main, to be scarcely adequate ; for even our own historian employs the same term to indicate the condition of Elizabeth and Zacharias long before the day of Pentecost (see Luke i. 41, 47). But, overlooking for a while this circumstance, let us examine the expression in itself. It intimates, we find, that in the Apostles not only was nothing left untouched by the

Holy Ghost, but that also the Holy Spirit had pervaded and penetrated them entirely; so that in their case we cannot help but regard the Spirit as a power which modifies and converts the whole character. If, then, we should not, in any case, be justified in estimating the same expression by the same standard in the two cases; and if similar expressions in the Old Testament with reference to human persons, such, for instance, as the "coming on of the Holy Spirit" (see Judges vi. 34; 1 Chron. xii. 18; 2 Chron. xxiv. 40), are still less to be understood in such completeness of meaning, it becomes necessary to shew the authority we have for taking the phrase here in so absolute a sense. To do this we must go back to the general remark that the Scripture, in every preliminary stage of its development, is wont to employ expressions which, in their full propriety, belong exclusively to the final accomplishment. This fact makes it the imperative duty of all commentators to acquaint themselves thoroughly at all times and on all occasions with the internal development of the history set before them in Scripture. In order, therefore, fully to understand both the expression before us and others like it, we must keep in mind the condition, on which alone the Spirit of God can work absolutely on man or can truly fill him. For the absolute operation of the Spirit on man requires in man an absolute fitness for its reception; since it is implied in the moral nature of man that absolutely nothing can come into him which he does not himself willingly admit. But now the foundation of the natural man is flesh (see John iii. 6), and that is directly the opposite to Spirit, and is the principle that works counter to the Spirit (see Gal. v. 17), and therefore this absolute fitness for the reception by no means exists in the natural man. This absolute receptive capacity for the operation of the Spirit is first found in him who is "born, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit." This man also is, it is true, flesh (see John i. 14), but here it is not flesh of the Will of the Flesh (see John i. 13), but by the will and the operation of the Spirit (see Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 35). This Flesh, therefore, though not indeed spiritual, and still less Spirit, yet as essentially it drew its origin from the Spirit, is thoroughly fitted for the reception of the Spirit. Of such an one, therefore, it is said, in the fullest sense of the term, that he was filled with the Holy Ghost (see Luke iv. 1). Now this person,

in the further course of His history, brought to its full manifestation this fulfilling of human nature with the Holy Ghost, and the accomplishment of this manifestation was even that sublime and memorable spectacle which He displayed before His disciples at His Ascension. In that Ascent, without visible agency from the earth—in His vanishing into the depths of Heaven—it was shewn, that even the body of Jesus was thoroughly pervaded by the Spirit, and had become participant of the Spirit. But He had formed to himself on earth a bond of communion with those who had devoted themselves to Him; these He had embraced with perfect love, and had called them His friends and His brethren (see John xv. 14, 15; xx. 17). That, therefore, to which His very love impelled He had also made bounden on himself by His promise, that He would permit all His to be partakers in His glory (see John xii. 32, xvii. 22). But this community of glory could not be effected otherwise than by the disciples becoming partakers of the same Spirit which had filled Jesus, which had changed what was corporeal in Him into spiritual, and which could only proceed from Him. Here, then, in the history of Redemption, is that point mentioned, at which the only foundation, whereon the communication of the Holy Spirit to man can rest, becomes manifest. Accordingly, if at earlier times mention has been made of the communication of the Spirit, and it has been spoken of in absolute terms, we have undoubtedly to understand thereby an operation of the Spirit on human nature. But these are undoubtedly operations which could not attain to the perfect filling of the individual, which, as invariably meeting in each case with obstacles in the flesh, were simply on that account unable to produce any lasting result. The unqualified character of the language, in such cases, has its source precisely in this fact, that the operation of the Spirit manifests itself as unconditional; while further, this also seems to be involved in it, that, whereas the inner nature does not appear to correspond to the description, the description assumes the shape of a prophetic form or type (*τύπος*) which is afterwards to be fulfilled.

We are therefore not only justified, but also bound to take the expression in the passage before us . . . . *ἐπλήσθησαν ἅπαντες πνεύματος ἁγίου* in the full sense of the words. We are the more disposed consequently to regard this moment as the actual com-

mencement of a new æra in the history of man, even because the expiration of all previous communications of the Spirit is brought before our eyes in the very history of those persons, of whom this being filled with the Spirit is predicated. We shall scarcely miss the true purport of Holy Scripture, if we assert that mightier operations of the Spirit had not generally been felt, than those which the disciples had experienced in their intercourse with the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth (see John i. 14), and in what they had heard and seen and handled of the Eternal Life become flesh (see 1 John i. 1—4). And yet it nevertheless appears that, even after all these operations of the Spirit, the flesh triumphed, and the Spirit gave way, in the very three who were the most intimately trusted of this little band of disciples (Matt. xxvi. 41), and that even the firmest of them all (see John i. 43; Matt. xvi. 10—18) fell the lowest (see Luke xxii. 31, 32). What else is this intended to shew us, than that even those, who had partaken of the most powerful and the most pervading influences of the Spirit still were, and continued to be, Flesh, and that consequently, up to the time we are considering, we must regard all humanity as included under the ban of the Flesh? Was then this ban to be taken off from the disciples at the word and command of the risen and ascended Jesus? We cannot in truth agree with Kuhnoel in regarding the solemn word and sign of the Ascended One merely as a reference to the Future; still, on the other hand, it is impossible for us to estimate this fact as highly as Lücke does, who, by maintaining, that the Pentecost is not so much the sudden beginning as rather the culminating point of a communication of the Spirit, which the minds of the Apostles constantly become more and more conscious of (see Lücke Commentär. üb. d. Ev. Johannes. 11. 795), would have us regard that event (see John xx. 22) as making an epoch. Indeed, we cannot rate it even as highly as Hofmann does, who in the former act of the risen Lord is disposed to recognize a strengthening of the personal faith of His disciples, but, on the other hand, in the proceedings of the Pentecostal Festival, an awakening and a qualification of the believers for the purpose of bearing testimony to Him in the world. (See Weiss. w. Erfll. ii. 205.) Each of these latter views derogates from the real importance of the event of Pentecost. With regard to

Lücke's view, in the first place, the term "culminating point" is scarcely an appropriate one; for we have just seen that the gift of the Holy Spirit was so far from having proceeded with a growing intensity that, on the contrary, during the very last days a total absence of the Spirit was manifest in the disciples; moreover, a becoming-conscious of the gift of the Spirit is by no means characteristic of the Pentecostal event, of which the actual communication of the Holy Ghost was the chief point (see ii. 23). And, as respects Hofmann's view, I cannot at all discover in it that acuteness and profundity which on other occasions are so peculiar to him. For on what, let us ask, is founded the distinction which he draws between personal and official? Is it not rather with the solemn breathing on the Apostles that their vocation is associated, both in what precedes and in what follows it? and conversely on this day of Pentecost we have surely, and in the first instance, to look away from the Apostles' office and vocation, since it is the whole body that is here expressly spoken of—nay, rather each individually (see ii. 1, 3, 4, 17, 18), and in this body, besides the Apostles, many others, nay even women, were present (see i. 14). And if we cast a look back upon the previous history of redemption, we shall see that it is precisely the personal character (as Hofmann himself, following out the views of Schleiermacher, has so convincingly shewn) that had not been pervaded by the renewing of the Holy Ghost. If, therefore, Pentecost is the epoch of the new life in humanity, then it must have been nothing less than the new personality that was then created. If now we glance back at John xx. 22, there evidently appears no ground for thinking of the gift of the Spirit there spoken of, otherwise than as entirely consummated before the day of Pentecost, and therefore as more than a transitory influence. And we shall become quite certain on this point when we consider the words which were uttered at a later period by the risen Jesus, with reference to that reception of and investiture with power from on high which was presently to take place (see Luke xxiv. 47; Acts i. 8), in which we trace in the disciples a failing of the power of the Spirit up to the very last day of their intercourse with the Lord. But, between this and the day of Pentecost, their state is described to us as one of continual prayer (see i. 14, ii. 1). If therefore we turn our

regards to the disciples, they appear as empty vessels, but yet prepared for the reception of the Holy Ghost. If we look at the Lord himself, we see that He has becomep articipant in all the fulness of the Spirit, enthroned on the seat of dominion over all flesh. As, therefore, Jesus has entered upon the full possession of His power, so with the disciples their fitness of reception has reached its full measure. If, then, we are told in this passage, that all the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, we ought to understand it in the strict sense of the words, and to recognize therein that consummation after which all previous operations had been striving, and had been pointing the way.

This fulfilling of all who were there assembled with the Holy Ghost is the very heart and core of the whole matter. For in this centre, all that here comes into consideration must issue, and be estimated with reference to it. Here too belongs, in the first place, the relation between the festival and the fact. It has become a matter of course with us to point out the connection and the relation between the last events in the history of Jesus with the purport of the feast days on which they severally occurred. With regard, however, to this Pentecost, we are wont to trouble ourselves little or not at all with this relation between Judaism and Christianity. But surely it would be inconceivable, if, with regard to the Feast of the Passover, the parallel does exist between the type and its accomplishment, yet as regards the Pentecost (which, nevertheless, has been shewn to be dependent on the Passover, and to be connected with it by a necessary relation) there should exist no trace of such a parallel. But the connection between the Jewish Feast, and that which on it befel the disciples, is, moreover, brought more immediately before us by the fact, that our Lord directed His disciples to that very numbering of these days by which the Jews themselves were wont to reckon the day of Pentecost (see i. 5). And this does seem to have been felt in a general way; since occasionally a relation has been actually admitted between the gift of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles and the purport of the Jewish Pentecost—but in such way as to modify not a little the true significance of the Festival itself. For it is said, as by Meyer, for instance, though not without further explanation, that the Pentecost was "a commemoration of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai,

and at the same time a Feast of First Fruits," yet, with the exception of some of the Fathers, all, who call attention to this connection, dwell upon this relation of the giving of the Law, and see in the communication of the Holy Spirit the fulfilment of that event of the Old Testament. The matter is, no doubt, made somewhat easy by these explanations ; but Hofmann, with great justice, observes that it is above all necessary not to ascribe to this Festival any other signification than the one which it has in the Old Testament (see Weissag. u. Erfull. 11. 107). What the Old Testament brings prominently forward is the reference of this Feast to the completion of the harvest ; and we are the more led to this signification of the Festival by the fact that the numbering of the weeks and days from which the Pentecost derives its name, is connected, not with the historical, but with the physical element of the Passover—the offering of the sheaf of the first fruits. The question then arises, what the offering of the two loaves of leavened bread from the first fruits of the house of Israel, together with other oblations (see Levit. xxiii. 17—20), had in common with the filling of the Apostles with the Holy Ghost? This question, however, leads us back, first of all, to the further question, what meaning had the offering of the sheaf of the first fruits relatively to the closing events of the history of Jesus?

If even in creation and its history plants are set forth as the natural type of man (see Theol. comment. z. A. Test. 1, 1, 21) and if therewith the observation of nature coincides, as Frederick Schlegel somewhere says : "the more godlike a man, or a work of man's is, the more will it resemble the plants ; amongst the forms of nature this is the most ethereal and the most beautiful ;" therefore it can excite no surprise that He in whom the destination of man found its full realisation—The Son of Man (see Dan. vii. 13) —should, in the most sublime and peculiar sense, be thought of and designated the Branch, the fruit of the earth (see Is. iv. 2 ; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15 ; Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12). But now corn is the most important and most essential of the fruits of the earth (Gen. iii. 17 ; Ps. civ. 14), and of all the fruits of the wheat harvest, the Easter sheaf had the pre-eminence simply as the first fruits of the whole harvest. But the parallel between Jesus and the sheaf of the first fruits is drawn still closer by that which was

done to both. The sheaf of the first fruits was presented to Jehovah by waving, and accompanied with other sacrifices (see Levit. xxix. 9—14), and thereby it was translated from this side of the world into the other side of the divine presence (see Theolog. Comment. i. 2, 83, 84.) And what was done to Jesus? He came from the Father and actually entered into this side of existence in the world, and then, by the everlasting Spirit, He brought and offered up that weak flesh which held Him bound to this world, and like the veil of the temple (see Heb. x. 20) separated Him from God (see Heb. ix. 14); and after that He had thus, in the strength and power of the indwelling Spirit, allowed His flesh to pass through death and the grave (see 1 Pet. iii. 19), by His resurrection He returned again unto the Father (see John xx. 17.) Just therefore as on this great Paschal Feast it was one day after the Passover that the truth of the Paschal lamb was fulfilled, so one day after the offering of the sheaf of the first fruits, the typical prophecy thereof received its fulfilment on the morning of the Resurrection of the Lord (see Lightfoot Opp. 11. 693.)

Now, in all this the bearing of the bread of the first fruits on the events of the Christian Pentecost becomes immediately obvious. In the loaf the corn in its natural shape—the sheaf—has reached its destination. Similarly the history of Jesus up to its completion has not its end in itself, but rather in its influence and effects on the human race. Now the first permanent effect of this history is the filling of the disciples with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. For since this filling with the Holy Ghost is the victory over the Flesh, so in the disciples at the Feast of Pentecost, for the first time since the separation was effected between God and man, the divine communion with man was restored and consequently the end of every movement in the History of Redemption was attained. And just so the other aspect of the matter possesses also its truth: as little as we are able to think of bread without its essence, the corn; just as little can we conceive of any fulfilment within the human race without the fulfilment of the history of the Son of Man; since the perfection of the One is the eternal foundation for the perfection of the many. Herein we have expressed the chief element in the fulfilment of the Type contained in the ritual of the Old Testament Festival; and from this point of view also our conception of the narrative before us is confirmed

as will also be still further the case, when at a later period we shall have to enter upon other subordinate relations between the type and its fulfilment.

But must we then go further, and with Hofmann reject altogether the idea of any relation between the event of the present Pentecost and the giving of the Law from Mount Sinai, and put aside, as mere fiction, all that, from Danz down to Neander, has been advanced in confirmation of it? Hofmann indeed tells us, what indeed had been remarked even before him, that Philo and Josephus knew nothing of any connexion between the Jewish Pentecost and the giving of the Law. But even supposing—what, however, may well be doubted—that from these two writers we can discover what were really the sentiments of all the Jews in their days relatively to this matter; still the question is not, how soon or how late the connection between the Pentecost and the giving of the Law came to be recognized and acknowledged, but simply whether there is any ground for it at all. Now that the day on which the Law was given was really the fiftieth after the Exodus, and therefore the fiftieth from the Passover, may easily be shewn from Exod. xix. 1 (see Lundius, jüdische Alterthümer S. 1019, Meuschenii N. T. p. 740, 744; Theolog. comment 1, 1, 519.) Now that we must regard this coincidence as purely accidental, is forbidden by the strict chronological data, Exod. xix. 1; according to which the Pentecost or fiftieth day is to be reckoned, and therefore must assume alongside of the physical Pentecost, an historical one also, so that also in this respect the Pentecost exactly corresponds to the other two great Festivals which, it is admitted, do comprise these two aspects, the physical and the historical. And by its final allusion to the bondage in Egypt and the statutes of the Lord, was not the law itself concerning the Pentecost, intended to convey a reference, by no means indistinct, to the historical aspect of this second great festival in Israel (Deut. xvi. 7—12.)

All that would now be requisite would be to point out the relation between the event we are now describing and the giving of the Law which the anniversary of Pentecost must always serve to recall. In this attempt it is above all things necessary to consider the Sinaitic Legislation in the same light as that in which the History of the Old Testament sets it forth, and not in that in

which it subsequently appears in connection with the teaching of St Paul. Even at his first call it was indicated to Moses, as the final object thereof, that the people of Israel, when delivered from Egypt, should serve God on Mount Horeb (see Exod. iii. 12). And correspondent to this first announcement as to the sojourn of the Israelites on Mount Sinai, is the solemn declaration of Jehovah when Israel had actually arrived at Sinai (see Exod. xix. 4). "I bore you on eagle's wings and brought you unto myself." Thus, then, out of that alienation from God in which Israel had been living during this bondage in Egypt he had been brought nigh unto God on Mount Sinai, and it is from this point of view that the sojourn at Sinai, and especially the giving of the Law, must be regarded. Accordingly, on Sinai, Jehovah, in the words of His Law, reveals Himself, as He is, to His people, as they were encamped around the mountain in the valley beneath; and in proportion as Israel has entered into communion with Jehovah, he rejoices in this revelation of the nature and will of Jehovah, and consequently recognizes with joy, that he is partaker of that word which is destined for ever to lead and to bless him. The voice of this joy in the legislation of Mount Sinai sounds throughout the whole of the Old Testament, but it speaks out most distinctly in three Psalms, the first, the nineteenth, and the hundred and nineteenth. Even the Synagogue retained a consciousness of this significance of the revelation of the Law on Mount Sinai. Thus Rabbi Isaac says: "On the first day of these seven weeks the redemption of bodies takes place; on the last the redemption of souls" (see Meuschenii N. T. p. 737, 742.) According to another rabbinical interpretation, the giving of the Law is the marriage of the heavenly virgin, that is, the Law, to the people Israel (see Meuschenii p. 743.) However the history of this legislation from Mount Sinai has itself furnished reasons, why the consideration of this aspect of the matter could not establish itself. For alongside of those elements which seem to indicate a final communion between Jehovah and Israel, others immediately present themselves which indicate the very contrary. Before the revelation of Jehovah on the mountain actually takes place, the people are restrained from approaching, both by external means and also by a terrible menace (see Exod. xix. 12, 13, 21, 24); moreover we learn that during the actual manifes-

tation of Jehovah, the people, terrified and unable to support the near presence to the Holy God, removed and stood afar off (see Ex. xx. 18, 19) ; and lastly this selfsame Holy Mountain is witness to a great and universal defection of Israel from their God (see Exod. xxxii. 1—6). These circumstances in the history, pointing to a still existing separation between Jehovah and Israel, were a sign that Israel was still to look onwards to another drawing nigh to, and union with God, different from that vouchsafed to them on Mount Sinai; that there must come a true and perfect Pentecost, such as that which is historically brought before us in the passage we are now considering. In this, Israel is really brought nigh to Jehovah ; the separation has disappeared ; here Israel hears the word of his God ; but here there exist no signs of fear ; nothing is heard but praise and thanksgiving ; here at length the backsliding is at an end ; for the Spirit of Jehovah has become the Spirit of Israel. And if we inquire for the reason why the case is so different with this later Pentecost and with that at Sinai, and why the former substantiates and realizes what the latter only typifies and points to, it manifestly arises from the difference between the Passovers from which the two Pentecosts are respectively counted and named. In the one there is an atonement by the blood of a beast, and how could the deliverance of the soul from sin be effected and its union with the all-Holy God be brought about by such means ? But in the other we have an atonement by the blood of the Son of God. What wonder if for such a price the curse was removed from off the souls of men ; and if there is now no longer any obstacle to their reunion with God on the day of Pentecost—or the day of the completion of their reconciliation with God.

Having thus placed in a clear point of view the peculiar character of the great event of our Festival, as well by means of the narrative as also by the relation between that and the true import of the Festival under the Old Testament, we shall perhaps succeed in understanding also that portion of our narrative which relates to the external proceedings of that event. These proceedings are either anterior to the filling with the Holy Ghost or follow it. Immediately preceding the outpouring of the Spirit an audible something and a visible something is spoken of. That which was heard was like the noise of a rushing mighty wind

which came down from heaven and filled all the house where the disciples were sitting (ver. 2). In the Hebrew and in the Greek indeed the breath and the wind is a natural image of the Spirit (see Ezek. chap. xxxvii. ; John iii. 8, xx. 22). The sound therefore of a mighty wind is evidently intended to be a sign of the approaching Spirit. To the disciples, and to all who, in faith, had hitherto followed the historical events, the coming of this noise from heaven would be a proof that it came from Him who had gone up on high ; and thereby it would also become manifest that this sign was not intended to represent the Spirit, as had hitherto been the case, but that it was to be regarded as an actual consequence of—what was now existing and accomplished—the supremacy of the Spirit over the whole terrestrial sphere. Consequently, the external circumstances connected with the event of Pentecost are by no means of so little consequence as Neander supposes, and therefore Rossteuscher (see his die Gabe der Sprache S. 14, 15) is quite in the right in his opposition to him on this point. The filling of the whole house with this mighty sign is an intimation, that the persons for whose sake the token had taken the direction of this particular house, were themselves to be filled with the Holy Ghost. The audible token is now followed by a visible one: "There appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." "The one power," says Rossteuscher, "which at first was merely audible to the disciples (ver. 1), and then sensibly blew around them (ver. 2), divides itself; since its invisible substance, which had been diffused around, is suddenly concentrated into visible tongues of fire, which settled, licking, on the head of each one of the one hundred and twenty." (See also Meyer on ἐκάθισε.) The instances of analogous phenomena adduced by Schöttgen out of Jewish writers, and by Wetstein out of heathen authors, are of little use to us, since they only point generally to a union of the divine with the human, whereas in the case before us we must recognize a very special and singular manifestation. Moreover, fire, as it appears to be in these supposed analogies, is evidently not the principal circumstance, and the shape of a tongue the subordinate element; while the reference to Isaiah v. 24 has already been rightly rejected by Bengel in the words "manet magna pars proprietatis quia de loquela agitur." If then the tongue-

shape is the primary feature of this phenomenon, and fire nothing more than an accompaniment of it, the question arises what are we to understand by this sign? The Spirit which is to purify Israel is spoken of by Isaiah (see iv. 4) as a Spirit of burning. As, therefore, the fire consumes matter, so will the Holy Spirit burn up all that is impure, all flesh. (See Isai. xl. 7.) It was in such a signification that fire was constantly present before the eyes of the people of Israel. The sacred fire which burned day and night on the altar performed, in truth, by its pervading energy, no other office than that of dissolving from the bonds of this world whatever was offered, and setting it free to ascend into the other as a sweet savour. This import of the fire on the altar is, by the narrative in Isaiah vi. 5—7, brought into very close affinity with the sign we are considering. Isaiah bewails the uncleanness of his lips, and this impurity is immediately taken away by a live coal from the altar. But this impurity of the lips with which Isaiah accuses himself and all mankind, remains still the same. For the fire on the altar might indeed sanctify the matter of the sacrifice, but for the people it was and continued to be nothing more than a symbol. Now, however, the Spirit is to come as a thoroughly cleansing fire (Matt. iii. 11), and therefore the tongue, as the inmost and principal organ of speech, appears glowing with fire. The tongue, thus glowing with fire, is consequently the organ freed from all impurity, but which, as being preserved in this process of purification, is consequently a renewed and sanctified organ, so that thus kindled by the Holy Spirit it is the very opposite of the tongue set on fire of hell (see James iii. 6.) The circumstance that these fiery tongues were distributed among all the individuals of that assembly is a proof that, that which is indicated by those symbols, will be realised to each one, as the effect of their being filled with the Holy Ghost. It is therefore at once intimated that this fulfilling with the Spirit, which is an internal process, is to reveal itself by an outward manifestation. Why this utterance should be made by means of the tongue, we can easily discern even here. The tongue is, in truth, the first and most immediate revealer of the thoughts and intents of the heart (see Matt. xii. 34); it is the threshold of the door between the inner and the outer world. If in earlier periods the tokens of the communication of the Spirit evidenced

themselves by striking effects in the whole body, this remarkable abundance of the outward signs was a proof of the meagreness of the inward influence. If, on the contrary, in the case before us, the gift of the Spirit manifests itself primarily in a renewing of the tongue, we may infer from that fact, that now the gift of the Spirit is an actual filling, which, passing outwards from within will by continual influences, pervade the whole body. If now, after describing this sign, it is written, "and they were filled with the Holy Ghost" (ver. 4), it is evident that we must understand this, the chief element of the whole event, as occurring simultaneously with the descent of the tongues on the head of each ; and hereby we arrive at the conclusion which otherwise suggests itself, that the emblems were themselves filled with the Holy Ghost, and are consequently His appropriate organs, by means of which He on this occasion imparts Himself to the assembled believers.

When now we pass on to that portion of our narrative, which occupies the greatest space, and has especially puzzled the commentators, we have, I think, the advantage of being at once in a position to assign to it its proper position. In general commentators allow themselves to be deceived by appearances, and, consequently, that which is set forth at the greatest length is regarded as forming the real gist of the matter ; and so they interpret and argue, as if the great event of Pentecost had consisted essentially in the speaking with tongues ; whereas it is very consistent and quite conceivable, that the most important element in the whole matter was something unseen and hidden, and which admits of being expressed in one short word. In fact, this is the case here. That filling with the Holy Ghost, which befel each individual of the assembled disciples, is the chief fact that our narrative intends to inform us of. The speaking with tongues is nothing more than the immediate effect and outward manifestation of the event, which had been accomplished in the inmost depths of the individual personality of each. If the narrative uses the words "they began," it intended thereby to remind us, that with this filling with the Holy Ghost a perfectly new thing had been brought about, for all with regard to which our consideration is invited to the means, whereby this new thing was to make itself known. "They spake," we are told, "with

other tongues," and, in order that we might entertain no doubt that this took place in consequence of the gift of the Spirit, the almost superfluous remark is added, "according as the Spirit gave them utterance." That the beginning should be made with a speaking was intimated simply by the tongues that appeared, and we have also seen that such a beginning was in perfect keeping with the nature of the case. The limitation, however, "with other tongues," can primarily signify nothing else to our minds than that, by the influence of the Spirit, the tongues of the disciples were essentially changed, or that, whereas before they had been organs of the flesh, they were now become instruments of the Holy Ghost. Let us here pause and inquire, what probably was the subject of the discourse of this renewed and sanctified organ? For that in their proceedings the matter was quite subordinated to the form, as Kahnius would represent the case (see his Lehre vom heiligen Geist. S. 64), is to our minds totally inconceivable. On the contrary, we must maintain that the tongue has here the same purport as elsewhere; namely, that of being the organ of speech, and consequently of being employed merely for the sake of the word. Perhaps then the disciples, with their regenerated tongues, will begin to preach the Gospel? So most people imagine; and yet nothing lies further from the truth. For to whom shall they preach the Gospel? To each other? This no one would be willing to suppose, but as Zeller has justly insisted on (see Theolog. Jahrb. 1849, S. 127.) no one besides themselves was present when they began to speak. And, moreover, it was not the Apostles alone who were present, but a great number, of whom there certainly were some,—the women, for instance,—who were not called upon to preach the Gospel.

And if we confine our thoughts to the Apostles alone, was it really likely that at such a moment, every other consideration being disregarded, the duty of influencing others would have been first and foremost in their thoughts? Let us only realize to our minds the fact, that the whole company had, for several days, been engaged in incessant prayer for the promised Spirit, and that now, both by the arrival of that Festival in Israel to which their Lord had not obscurely alluded, and also of its solemn hour of prayer, their minds had been strained to the

highest pitch of expectation. And then, that which they had been hoping and praying for, was suddenly vouchsafed to them; in such a manner, however, as with all their expectation they could neither have thought of or conceived. It is on this account that the very occurrence of the fact is described as sudden (ver. 2.) Viewed in this connection, this sudden surprise had naturally nothing to alarm or disturb them, but is simply a sign that the reality was incomparably more satisfactory and blissful than in their hopes and prayers they had any idea of. An event of incomparable importance had occurred. Since the fall of man from God, from the beginning consequently of his history, a great gulf had existed between God and man; no labours, no efforts, no self-renunciation, no self-torture among Jews or Gentiles, could avail to bridge over this gulf. As long as man was hampered by the bann of the flesh, all must quail before the cherub with the waving sword of flame. But here, for the first time, is the human race of Adam brought out of its long and painful separation and estrangement, and restored to a holy communion with its God and Father. Or, if we look to the perfect signification of the feast, like the holy consecrated Pentecostal bread this company is separated from the rest of the God-estranged world, and placed before the face of Jehovah—the holy and gracious God. As the people of Israel, when delivered from the hands of their oppressors, and led in the peaceful and undisturbed solitude of the wilderness, were brought to the holy presence of their God; so, in the undisturbed and sacred solitude of their inner life did this assembly experience the holy pervading of their entire essence by the divine creative spirit which had formed them.

With such an event, with such a state, no other utterance could accord than that of thanksgiving and praise to God. The rendering thanks and praise to the Creator and the Lord is, according to Scripture, that voice which originally indwelt in all beings, and which, therefore, when all things were brought back to their proper condition, would necessarily and spontaneously sound forth again (see Ps. xlviii.; Revel. v. 13). But from the time when man, by hearkening to a creature of the dust instead of the Lord of Heaven, first humbled himself to the dust, his voice had become earthly and had lost its heavenly intonations (see John iii. 31); the holy angels who, remote from the sphere of humanity, are

near to God, alone continue to praise him (see Job xxxviii. 7; Isaiah vi. 3; Ps. ciii. 20, cxlviii. 2), and the heavens alone declare without ceasing the glory of the Lord (Ps. xix. 1—7). But when now the breath of God had come once more upon man thus taken from the dust, and who had again returned to the dust, not so much to make that dust a living soul as rather to bring the flesh back to the service of the spirit, and in so far to raise up to heaven again man so sunk beneath the dominion of earth, would not that voice which originally was part and parcel of man's being ring out and combine in one chorus the voice of man with the voice of the angels and of the heavens?

That such was the case we find from the report of the eye-witnesses, who tell us that they "declared the wonderful works of God" (ver. 11). This conclusion is farther confirmed to our minds by another solemn occasion on which we have recorded a similar great event—the filling with the Holy Ghost; for here too the praise of God is declared to have been the first utterance of this internal conversion, and this thanksgiving and praise of God is also, on this occasion, called in speaking with tongues (x. 46). And it is in perfect accordance with this idea and expression that St Paul, when discoursing of him who speaks with tongues (a phrase which, at all events, alludes to something analogous to the fact before us), says that he *οὐκ ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ, ἀλλὰ τῷ θεῷ* (1 Cor. xiv. 2).

Hitherto all has been simple; but the matter apparently becomes involved in greater difficulty by that which the assembled Jews predicate of the Pentecostal event. St Luke tells us, for instance, that owing to the sound from Heaven which took the direction towards the house in which the disciples were assembled, the attention of the people was aroused, and that they came together from all quarters to the house for the purpose of seeing and hearing. From amidst the crowd of these eye-witnesses Luke brings prominently forward a certain number of the Jews who had originally dwelt in divers quarters of the Roman Empire, but who were now settled at Jerusalem: "Those that are hereby meant are Jews," pertinently remarks Rossteuscher, p. 18, "who, as *ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς* homines pii, religiosi, had settled in the Holy City, and in the vicinity of the temple, in order not to miss any feast. They must, consequently, be carefully distinguised, both

from original inhabitants and natives of the city, and also from the mere pilgrims to the feast." These pious Jews who were dwelling at Jerusalem out of every nation of the earth were pre-eminently those whose attention had been roused to the great event of Pentecost, and who were all amazed "when," as they said, "they each one heard them speaking in their own tongues" (vers. 6, 11). That in this place what is spoken of is languages to which the disciples, as Galileans, were strangers, can only be denied by the greatest prejudice, and needs, therefore, no further proof from us. As to the difficulty which Bleek insists on; how, namely, each foreign Jew could hear the whole of the disciples speaking in his own native tongue, this has been got rid of by Zeller by a fair interpretation of the text: "Each hears his own language from one or other of the disciples. The narrator comprises in one general statement the expressions of the individuals who assert this, as St Paul," (Cor. i. 12; see above S. 28). With respect to the enumeration of the different people and the names of the countries—it begins with the furthest east (the Parthians), from whence it proceeds further and further westward till it comes to Judea. The western countries follow next, from Cappadocia to Pamphylia; then the southern, from Egypt to Cyrene; all the western are classed together as Roman; and then, apart from all geographical consideration, Cretes and Arabians are placed together (see Rossteuscher p. 25; comp. Olshausen p. 583.)

This enumeration is evidently designed to convey an impression of universality; it is to bring before our minds the multitude of peoples and tongues which exist under heaven (see ver. 5.) It is true that this speaking of the disciples in tongues, hitherto entirely unknown to them, and in all languages of the world, is at first sight so much the more surprising, the more inner and subjective we have conceived this speaking to have been. According to our own conception of it, there is not the slightest room for supposing there was any intentional or conscious regard to these strangers and foreigners—any desire to let them hear in their own tongues the testimony of the Gospel—a consideration which has generally been maintained to be the true explanation of the miraculous discourse. According to our understanding of the passages, the disciples were entirely absorbed in themselves,

with their thoughts directed towards God, whose spirit had become theirs. A great difficulty, however, here presents itself, the nature of which has been well stated by Zeller in the following terms. This event contradicts the essential character of the human mind—the very idea of which implies its freedom—that is, that nothing can be put into it which it has not itself put into it by its own voluntary act—that consequently no acquired capacity can be instilled into it instantaneously and from without, (see above S. 15). Now, it cannot be denied that this grave difficulty most especially presses upon our interpretation.

This difficulty involves us in the necessity of again bringing before our minds the assembly of the disciples at the moment in which they were filled by the Holy Spirit. If we glance at the future, we have here then given us that very beginning onward to its end, which, in an unbroken chain of progression, is destined to advance over every difficulty and through every obstacle. Here is the foundation laid of that building which Christ had already pointed out as something future (vid. Matt. xvi. 18) and against which the gates of Hell should not prevail. This Pentecostal assembly is consequently the beginning and the foundation of the Church of Christ to the end of time. Consequently nothing which is not connected with this beginning will ever take place within the history of redemption unto the end of days. Thus does this assembly then at Pentecost appear as the concentration of the entire development and manifestation of the Church of Christ upon Earth. To this view, which is supported by the very nature of the matter, we are likewise led by the relation which severally subsists between each of the Old Testament Festivals and this event. Did not the Pentecostal loaves, as an offering of first fruits, represent (see Numb. xxiii. 18) the whole harvest? In the same way, therefore, we must regard the community of Pentecost as the holy offerings of the first fruits of the whole human race, which is yet to be gathered in (vid. Math. iii. 12; Joh. iv. 35, 36; Math. ix. 37, 38; Revelat. xiv. 15, 16.) Further, that Israel, which stood before Mount Sinai, was clearly the representative of all future generations, comp. (Deut. xxix. 14, 15), and, in a similar manner, the assembly at Pentecost must be the representative of all future ages of the Church. If now the individual members of this assembly, in fact and truth,

have and possess such significance and such a position relatively to the entire future of the Church, will logic be able to object any thing against the assertion that they also appear as such? And in fact nothing else and nothing more than this is to be seen or to be heard herein. The members of this Pentecostal assembly in all languages of the Earth declare the wonderful works of God. As Bengel long ago observed: hæc familia totius mundi, linguis Deum celebrans, erat instar totius Mundi linguis suis Deum celebraturi—an idea, which in modern times—though for the most part less clearly and less accurately expressed, has recently become more and more generally admitted. (Vid. Kling Stud. und Krit. 1839, p. 495. Schneckenburger Apostelg. p. 200. Meyer Commentar. p. 39. Zeller Theolog. Jahrb. 1849, 27. Rossteuscher, p. 92, 93. Löwe in Monatschrift für Theologie ū Kirche mit Berüchsichtigung d. hannoverschen Landeskirche 1851, p. 324.) The community of Pentecost, therefore, thus speaking in other tongues, is not so much Israel in the character of teacher of the whole Heathen world, as Hofmann expresses it (Weiss. u. Erfull. ii. 205), as rather Israel, which, as the chief of nations (see Deut. xxviii. 13; Exod. iv. 22), has received into herself all the heathen world, and which consequently, as the nation first brought near to God, has, sacerdotally, brought the whole human race back again to God, so that now all peoples, Jews and Gentiles, praise and glorify God in their own tongues.

Although we have firmly maintained the relation of our Pentecostal event to the festal commemoration of the giving of the Law upon Sinai, still we can say nothing concerning any connection between the legendary miracles of language on Sinai (vid. Bertheau. die 7 Gruppen mosaischer Gesetzte p. 11, 12) and the speaking with tongues on the day of Pentecost, a connection to which Gfrörer (see Geschichte des Urchristh. i. 2, 397, 398) and Schneckenburger (Apostelg. p. 202—285), have quite unnecessarily ascribed so much importance. On the contrary, it appears to me to be far more to the purpose to institute in this place a comparison with a remarkable feature in the rites of the day of Pentecost under the old Testament. Although, for instance, it was not lawful on other occasions to place leavened bread on the altar, yet on this day it was expressly ordered that

the two loaves, made of the first fruits, should be leavened (see Levit. xxiii. 17). And since it was also further enjoined that this bread should be brought out from the habitations of Israel, it is thereby implied that the leavened bread here meant is to be regarded as the common bread such as was to be found in daily use in the dwellings of the Jews. Now, do we not trace herein a symbol of this assembly speaking and praising God in the various tongues of the nations? We have seen that this variety of languages is to be regarded as actually representing the various nations, not the nations, however, such as they have become in the course of time; for as such they are opposed to each other, whereas here they have one and the same spirit; —as such they praise each their own gods, whereas here they all, with one consent, praise the one God of Heaven and Earth. And just as little should we be justified in supposing the nations then represented to be such as they were before they went forth at the dispersion, for then the whole earth was of one speech (see Gen. xi. 1), whereas here we have many languages. It is not therefore the nations as they existed in their original condition, but such as they had become by their historical development, such as they existed in reality—that are here represented as brought before God, and offered to God, exactly in the same way as the Pentecostal loaves, although they were an oblation to Jehovah, were just the same as the daily ordinarily used bread in the houses of Israel. Unquestionably there is also in the gift of tongues at Pentecost a reference to the confusion of tongues at Babel; but the allusion is not simply to the recovery from the confusion which then occurred as is implied in the well known saying of Grotius, "Poena linguarum dispersit homines donum linguarum dispersos in unum populum collegit." The reunion, that is, of the scattered nations of the earth into one people, is not the characteristic feature of our Pentecostal event, for that might be predicated even of an universal empire. But whereas the Empire of the world has the will and the power to exhibit unity only as identity—only by the annihilation of all historical peculiarities; in the unity which is here exhibited we find the languages of the nations maintaining all that is purest, noblest, and best in all their developments, only that they serve as organs of the Spirit to set forth the praise of God. We shall in truth be compelled by

this view to recognise in the development of the varieties of the human race and language another element besides that of man's sin and God's retribution. And in fact the sacred history of man's origin does itself refer us to such an element in this diversity which is purely natural, and has its ground in Creation itself (see Theolog. Comment. i. 1, 154, 155.) Since, however, in the development which had been left to itself this pure element of variety never appears without sinful admixture and opposition, it is here purified from this alloy of sin and consequently become no longer an obstacle in the way of unity, but rather its proper and vivifying principle.

§ 4. THE FIRST PREACHING OF THE APOSTLES.

(Chap. ii. 14—36.)

By the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the disciples of Jesus the Church was founded, and arrived forthwith at its self-manifestation. In the proceedings thereof there is absolutely no reference to the external world. We could conceive of this event as taking place in the absence of all observers and witnesses, and yet the event itself would remain entirely the same.

This is the more necessary to be borne in mind, since we are wont to hurry at once with the Church into the external world without conceding to her the blissful rest of self-consciousness; whereby we entirely lose sight of the truth that—as a foundation of all outward working, an idea perfect and complete in itself, is necessary (see Schleiermacher Christliche Sitte S. 294.) In the same way that the Lord himself manifests himself to the world before he began to work upon others (see Joh. i. 35, 40), so also this self-manifestation forms the beginning of His Church in the world. Exactly, however, as the manifestation of Jesus himself as the Lamb of God, furnished the occasion for his external activity (see Joh. i. 41, 52), so also with the Church her immediate self-manifestation brings on the commencement of her action on the world without. The pious Jews, gathered together from all quarters of the world, are filled with surprise, and amazed at the events which happened; others, on the contrary, under which

designation we must understand principally the inhabitants of the city—whose mind (as Rossteuscher justly remarks, p. 31), was somewhat blunted by their habitual familiarity with holy things, made a jest of the inspired assembly. In this wondering of the pious and the mockery of the profane, there was furnished a demand on the assembly to speak out, in order to confute the one and to win the other. Thereby the scene is now changed, and in the history of the Church a new and important epoch has arrived, even its starting point. The Church comes before the world with its testimony, and by means of this testimony seeks to pour forth and diffuse into a world totally void of the Spirit that spiritual life with which it was itself filled. Not only does our narrative inform us what this testimony was, but it also calls our attention to the significance of the events by means of the plainest signs, which, nevertheless, it is usual to overlook.

Whereas, in the preceding narrative, no distinction of any kind soever has been made among those who were assembled together on this Pentecost, henceforth the pre-eminence of the twelve Apostles is made distinctly noticeable. In consequence of the behavour of the Jews towards the assembly, St Peter takes up a position in the face of the surrounding spectators (σταθεὶς δέ). For now that work is to begin for which the Apostles were chosen and called, and for which they had received strength from on high (see i. 8). If it is further said, "he lifted up his voice," that is a mere matter of course; and if notwithstanding this statement is made, it is done merely with a view to arrest forcibly the attention of the reader, and to fix his thoughts on the moment before him (comp. Matth. v. 2). And Peter too does all in his power to draw attention to this, the first testimony of the Church of Christ.—He is conscious that at this moment, and at this spot, he is standing in presence of the whole house of Israel (see ver. 36), he sees in those assembled before him, not a multitude casually collected, but the representatives of the whole people, and more especially of the whole of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and as such he addresses them, and invites them in express terms both to listen to and to give heed to his address (ver. 14). As regards now this address of St Peter; two distinct parts have indeed been recognised therein by all the commentators; but with respect to the connecting link which

holds together these two parts, and which therefore forms them into a consistent whole, has not, so far as I have found, been anywhere taken notice of. And the reason of this, as it appears to me, is the circumstance that the reference of St Peter to the words of the prophet Joel has not been carefully enough weighed. Peter commences his discourse by declaring that the event which to those present had become a subject either of astonishment or of mockery, was the fulfilment of a well-known prophetic promise. What this prophecy says concerning the outpouring of the Spirit does not here call for any further explanation. Peter, however, adduces the declaration of the prophet precisely as it stands written in the same context, and it is doubtless his wish that his hearers should throughout recognise a relation between the prophecy and the event before them. And there is the more need to consider this, inasmuch as Peter introduces into the passage of Joel an expression, by which he conveys his own personal conviction as to the time of its fulfilment, and it is precisely in the second and more neglected part of the prophecy that this conviction finds its main support. For instead of the אַחֲרֵי־כֵן of the prophet, which is correctly rendered by the Septuagint by ἔσται μετὰ ταῦτα, Peter uses the words ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις. This expression, which, as commentators have remarked, corresponds to the Hebrew בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים, tells us that the latter days, which answers to רֵאשִׁית, were already come. For the Greek expression, which took its rise from the Alexandrian version, had already so shaped the idea that this posteriority, this end of days, could not be regarded as a precise moment. So that it becomes at once conceivable how Peter could speak of the end of days without excluding any further development.—Peter, indeed, is so far from doing so himself, that he was, it is evident, fully conscious that another development was yet necessary; and that he himself was at that very moment introducing the first step of that development (see ver. 39). Since, therefore, the expression ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις by no means excludes a movement of time, and consequently is not used to assert a quantitative distinction of the time from the preceding and earlier periods, it must therefore refer to the quality of time. And does not the quality of the period which had now

dawned appear to be a very peculiar one, and even such a one as was destined to contain the final close of the development of man's nature? Throughout the whole course of former periods there had been a constant struggle and agitation for the attainment of some single end; but this end, as often as it appeared to be entirely or nearly gained, eluded the grasp, and was withdrawn further and further into the remote distance. Here first of all has this ceaseless struggling and running reached its aim and arrived at a resting place. The movement of the course of time is here at last brought to a stop; time is for once satisfied, and concluded by eternity. Here therefore is the true end. Nothing further remains then than that this end, which here appears confined to a little point, should extend itself over the whole family of the human race. And, although this movement cannot go on except in that form of time, within which the development of all human things is comprised, still it is nevertheless the movement of the end, and stamps this period as the final period, and these days as the last days. Now, Peter infers that this last period had in fact commenced, not only from the outpouring of the Spirit, but he is also still further confirmed in this conclusion from a consideration of all that which Joel has associated with it—the threats against the Heavens and the Earth, the denunciation of the dissolution of the heavenly system, the change of the Sun and the Moon (ver. 20), and the laying waste of the Earth by fire and the sword (ver. 19). If such things are, as signs, to precede the great and terrible day of the Lord, in that case this day must bring with it nothing less than the destruction of Heaven and Earth. But if that, which is only temporal, ceases to be, then that also is an end; it is only another aspect of the end; since therewith time itself apparently comes to its end. If therefore the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the commencement of the end, the dissolution of the Heavens and the Earth forms the completion of that end. But, supposing that these threatening signs, and the passing away of the Heavens and the Earth, belong to the period of time now commencing, then all that hear these things are threatened; for all are involved in and mixed up with the things of Heaven and Earth. So long therefore as man, in his whole being and nature, stands on the platform of Heaven and Earth—on the platform

of this world, so long does this last time possess a threatening and terrible aspect for him. He has entered into the time which is incessantly bringing him nearer and nearer to the dissolution of the Heavens and the Earth, and consequently also to his own But that this is not man's only position in this last time is testified simply by the existence of that Pentecostal community. Upon them has this last time burst amidst an unutterable feeling of bliss; by them the dawning of this æra was hailed with songs of praise, such as had never before been heard from human tongues. And Peter's sole object in dwelling on the threatening and awful character of the æra about to commence was in order to turn the attention of his hearers to the only salvation from this last extremity. And for this same reason he does not omit to embrace in his discourse the following passage of the prophet: "And it shall come to pass, whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," ver. 21.

If the strict dependence of the passage concerning these threatening signs on the opening of that which speaks of the outpouring of the Spirit, had been more observed, these last words announcing the only salvation would have been more duly appreciated. In that case, it would doubtless have been perceived that the portion of the discourse which follows concerning Jesus the Christ, is not an independent and unconnected preaching of Christ, but rather the pointing out the very means of deliverance and salvation to which the attention of the hearers had throughout been directed, and which formed the natural conclusion to a certain chain of thought to which no link was wanting. All doubt on this point will disappear on a close comparison of the 21st verse with the 36th. If this calling on the name of the Lord is to be the only means of salvation in the last time, then every thing depends on our knowing who the Lord is. The name, the revelation, and the history of Jehovah had from the very first pointed onwards to the future, therefore the question "who is the Lord?"—in what form and under what historical relation does he appear, that in these last days He will have His name to be called upon? is, even from the Old Testament point of view, both intelligible and allowable. When, therefore, Peter now solemnly concludes his discourse with the words, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God

hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ," it becomes manifest that Peter's object is to bring immediately before his hearers the means of that salvation which had been pointed out to them at a distance in the words of the prophet. The circumstance that he calls Jesus not only the Lord, but also the Christ, serves as a further explanation of his meaning, for within this name of Christ or Messias were concentrated—in the mind of Israel—all their hopes of safety and of salvation for every time and for every need (comp. Ps. xviii. 51, lxxxiv. 10; 1 Sam. ii. 10).

But it is not dogmatically and on the simple authority of his Apostolic office that Peter lays before his auditory the testimony that Jesus had been made of God both Lord and Christ; for he goes on to prove his assertion by appealing to the consciences of his hearers, and in this way enforces conviction. For this purpose he employs a threefold argument. He first of all appeals to the divine approbation of Jesus as manifested in the wonders and miracles he wrought (ver. 22), to His resurrection (24—32), and the gift of the Holy Spirit to His disciples (33—35). On the first of these he touches only briefly, because the signs and the wonders, which he here mentions only generally, are not absolutely convincing; besides, with reference to these displays of His power, he appeals directly to their own knowledge (*καθὼς καὶ αὐτοὶ οἴδατε*, ver. 22). In order, however, that the impression in favour of the divine mission of Jesus derived from both His life and labours should not be effaced by the recollection of His shameful death, Peter strongly insists that His delivery into the power of the Jews, and from these again into the hands of the lawless heathens, was so far from being done without the permission of God, that it was really in accordance with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that it happened (ver. 23); and, with regard to the Resurrection, Peter shows, from the 16th Psalm, that the being uninjured by the power of death and the grave was an essential characteristic of Him who had been promised to David as the King of Israel. And that this criterion applied accurately to Jesus of Nazareth is next asserted by him, and, in confirmation thereof, he appeals to the Apostles who stood by his side, and were fellow witnesses with him to the truth (ver. 32). This proof he cannot bring nearer home to the hearts and consciences of his hearers, since it was

only to those who believed on Him that Jesus had shewed Himself openly after His Resurrection (vers. 1, 3, 10, 41). The rest knew only that he no longer remained in the grave where they had laid Him (see Matth. xxviii. 13—15). But the *claim* which he therewith makes upon his hearers requiring them to give credit to the assertions of himself and his fellow-witnesses as to a fact of their own personal experience is in no wise arbitrary, but inwardly persuasive and fully justified.

Who would have been able to distrust or suspect Peter and the other eleven Apostles when, from the midst of this highly inspired assembly, thus wonderfully occupied in praising God, they stood forth to deliver their earnest and weighty testimony? Such an one must have purposely shut his heart against the deep force of their evidence. He, however, who, with some degree of sensibility, did pay attention to the fact of the Resurrection of Jesus, would be confirmed in his belief in the strongest manner possible by this third proof, as even, in another point of view, the belief in the Resurrection stood in the most harmonious connection with the attestation publicly afforded to Jesus during His life, and so far must have found a support in what St Peter's hearers were themselves cognisant of. Finally, Peter appeals to something lying immediately before their eyes, namely, the outpouring of the Spirit, which, he says, "ye now both see and hear." How far then did this fact involve a proof that Jesus was the Lord and Christ? The whole company of the disciples of the Lord, and especially the Apostles, were personally known to Peter's hearers as those who had companied with Jesus; for otherwise how could they have told that they were Galileans (ver. 7) but because they recognised in them the companions of Jesus of Galilee? If then they now behold these companions of the crucified Jesus suddenly transplanted into a condition which excited the wonder and astonishment of all thoughtful and God-fearing men, how could it for a moment be conceivable that the visible end of their master, in the face of all the people, had really been His end? Could they regard this wonderful change in the circumstances of the disciples otherwise than as the work of their Lord? But it is Peter's object to shew, not only that Christ has risen again, but also that he is exalted to the right hand of God. He appeals, therefore, to the eyes and ears of

those whom he is addressing: had they not, with their own senses, perceived the sound which announced itself as a token of the Spirit and arrested the attention first of all those who were outside the place of the assembly? had they not remarked that this sound was like a rushing mighty wind, and therefore comparable to the wind which comes from above? had they not noticed that the sound had a direction downwards from Heaven? (ver. 2; comp. Rossteuscher ibid. S. 10.) If, then, both the place and the direction of this phenomenon point to Heaven, then it follows that He who alone could be the author of this change in the circumstances of His followers must be enthroned in Heaven. This enthronement in Heaven, however, according to the 110th Psalm, which St Peter quotes, is again set forth in Scripture as a mark which in David's case does not apply, but does apply to David's Lord, who can be no other than the promised Lord and Christ. And thus concludes the third proof with which Peter closes as solemnly as he had begun the first preaching of the Apostles.

§ 5. THE FIRST GROWTH OF THE CHURCH.

(Chap. ii. 37—47.)

The impression made by the first preaching of the Apostles is quite irresistible. The mockers are put to silence, either because they are converted from their error, or because, for fear of the multitude, they dare not give utterance to the thoughts of their hearts. The great majority of the hearers are pricked to their heart with a keen sorrow (*κατενύγησαν*). This inner perplexity has a two-fold ground. On the one hand those present are alarmed by the assertion of St Peter that the last time, whose end is to bring with it the dissolution of all things, is come, and by this announcement they are startled entirely from their sense of security and ease, and on the other they have become conscious that, in awful blindness, they have evinced a deadly hatred and opposition to that which was appointed to be their only refuge and safety in the last days. In the same measure that their dread of these last days drives them to the name of Jesus, which has been lifted up as the banner of salvation, does the

remembrance of their deadly malicious enmity against Jesus, which also is present to their minds, keep them back. The grief of their oppressed hearts, utterly destitute of counsel, is, however, so keen, that they betake themselves at once to the spokesmen of the inspired assembly, the Apostles, and especially Peter, with the question "What shall we do?" (ver. 37.) If Peter had had no further reply to make to this question than what he had already quoted from the prophet—"Let them call upon the name of the Lord"—he would have failed to satisfy that deep want of their heart which had thus manifested itself. For even though they now had become aware that this Lord was no longer He whom the heavens hid from their sight—far from the earth—no longer the God enthroned in the sanctuary of fire, and unapproachable to mortal sight and sense, but Jesus, who, clothed in the form and weakness of humanity, had gone about among them; how could they venture to call on Him whom they had rejected and crucified? To call upon the name of Jesus might indeed be the only means of salvation for the company of the believers (ver. 42), but exactly as the invocation of that holy name was the natural expression of their whole position, just so was it for those who asked the question a complete contradiction to their whole mental condition. At the very time that the disciples had enjoyed personal intercourse with Jesus in faith and love, and were entirely absorbed in it, the Jews had opposed such communion with hard speeches, with bitter calumnies, with persecution, and with treachery. In consequence of this their communion with Him, the ascended Lord had filled His disciples with His Spirit, had offered them as the holy first fruits to His and their Father, and had brought them as the truly redeemed people in holy communion with His God; whereas the Jews had nothing but their Pentecostal bread and burnt-offerings, and even now stood before their God with the same tremblings of heart as did their fathers at Sinai. Peter, therefore, was fully aware that the pricked hearts and smitten consciences of the Jews might reply to his first discourse, "The calling on the name of Jesus may be for you a means of salvation, but to us in our condition it is forbidden. Is there then no other? what must we do in order to be translated into your position?"

To this question Peter proceeds to give a full and satisfactory

answer, "repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." The change of mind is naturally the first requirement. For their former state had been one of persevering hostility against their saviour and redeemer from the extremest misery and corruption. This their change of mind they must, moreover, evince by placing themselves in the same relation to Jesus as that which his disciples had held. They cannot, it is true, any more behold Him with their eyes, hear Him with their ears, and handle Him with their hands; but His corporeality is not destroyed, it is only exalted in order that it may work with perfect freedom and unrestrained, where and how its holy purpose may impel it. A deep and true want of the heart comes here to light. The humiliated and sorrow-stricken Jews desire that the gulf between their spiritual condition and that of the assembly of Pentecost, with regard both to the calling upon the name of Jesus and also with regard to their whole relation to the person of Jesus, should be done away—and was it not for the very purpose of satisfying every true and genuine need of man, that the Son of God had taken upon him the nature of man? And on the other hand, however, His love is not partial; how can He have vouchsafed to one race the vicinity and presence of a corporeal communion if He wished to deny it to all other races? Must we not then conclude, from both these points, the need of man and the love of Jesus Christ,—that, in the place of the personal intercourse with Christ which, in the case of that company at Pentecost, had been the clearly recognised source of their being filled with the Spirit, a real and virtual equivalent should have been provided after the ascension of Jesus? This equivalent is baptism in the name of Jesus. Baptism embraces the natural body of men, and brings it by the outward rite into a definite relation to the ascended Jesus; there we have precisely the same as that which St John calls the hearing, seeing, and handling of eternal life (1 John i. 3). In both cases the ground of the possibility consists in this, that the eternal life—the redemption and the salvation from the greatest need, has entered into the form of a human corporeity. Whether, therefore, this corporeity is present in the manner of an earthly or of a heavenly existence, it is essentially the same; or, if we must

consider the difference, then we must say that Baptism, as the potent bringing before us of the heavenly body, comprises everything that the earthly could only effect by successive efforts. And this is an explanation of the fact that Jesus did not himself baptise, so John expressly remarks, iv. 2; His presence rendered baptism unnecessary; indeed the fact of His personally laying His hands on the little children furnishes an incontrovertible warrant for our practice of infant baptism.

And, now, how simple and convincing is the promise which Peter adds to those whom he had thus exhorted; "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." If the Jews, putting off their former disposition, and in the same sentiments of devotion —of faith and love—as the disciples had cherished in the company of Jesus, would put on His divine presence in baptism, then should they also become partakers of the same Spirit, with this difference only, that as they were moved by the perfected body of Jesus Christ, they would not have to wait as had the disciples who had been in communion with Him before his glorification. Now, after Peter had thus appealed to the inmost consciousness of the Jews, and had raised in them the hope of a participation in the Holy Spirit, he sought to seal this hope in them by proofs drawn from the Holy Scripture, just as in his first discourse he had endeavoured, by an appeal to the Holy Scriptures, to raise his hearers from their former thoughts and opinions to a healthy definite conviction and certainty, necessary to their salvation. He again recurs to the promise of the prophet Joel, and reminds them that it did not pertain to any select portion of the people of Israel, but to them as a whole, as indeed the prophet had expressly specified. Now Peter transfers and applies to the present occasion the promise thus specially given to Israel. First of all he speaks of the promise of the Spirit as belonging to all present, however they might exhibit the greatest possible diversity and variety of character; and secondly to their children especially, who, although absent, yet lay nearest to the hearts of those present; and, lastly, he speaks of those who were afar off. The question has been asked, are those afar off Jews or Gentiles? No such question could possibly have been proposed, nor could any such decision have been arrived at as that of Olshausen, who maintains that the heathen are intended, had the wholly

vivid pregnancy of meaning which lies in our narrative, and stamps every word with a concrete power, been duly recognised. How could Peter possibly have passed on to the heathen when neither the requirements of his hearers nor the prophet Joel himself, whom, as we shall immediately see, he clearly had before his eyes, lead him to do so? But the need of the affrighted Jews does indeed carry him to all the scattered members of their people, dispersed under the four winds of heaven. What shall be their fate in this final period of time, was a question which would immediately suggest itself to the minds of his hearers since the greater part of them had themselves belonged to these far off regions (ver. 39). If Peter says, that God will call them, and consequently makes the fact of their presence a condition of salvation, he does this neither on his own authority nor in any Jewish narrow-mindedness. In this passage Peter has evidently in his mind the words of the prophet Joel. Joel, for instance, in his word of prophecy, names Mount Zion as the only place of refuge from the signs of threatening in the Heavens and on the Earth (vid. iii. 5). Are those afar off to be saved? Then must they flee hither beforehand, or, in other words, the calling upon the name of the Lord, which is set before them as the only means of salvation, in conformity with the whole history of Revelation, is conceived of as connected with an earthly locality. But St Peter knows full well that, as it was not without God that Israel was dispersed among the heathen, so without God she cannot again be assembled together (comp. Isai. ix. 11, 12). We see, therefore, that Peter both passes over the heathen in silence, and also conceives of the form of the Kingdom of God in Israel as local and outward. In these recent times this is usually designated a Jewish prejudice, and is even branded as Ebionitism. The error which lies at the bottom of this reproach is as widely spread as it is deeply rooted. It is therefore neither possible nor indeed necessary fully to combat it in the present place. An unprejudiced exposition of the historical progress of the Church during its first period, such as it is depicted to us in the work we are considering, will furnish its best and completest refutation. Wherever therefore it shall present itself in our path, we shall notice it so far only as the occasion may render necessary. That Peter does not exclude the Heathen even though he does

not positively mention them in this place, is unnecessary to remark to any one, who is thoroughly acquainted with the Old Testament ; for no one assuredly would wish to place Peter at a lower point of view than that which is taken in the Old Testament. But now, in the Old Testament, from Abraham to Malachi, the calling and blessing of the heathen forms an integral part of the promise of Jehovah, and the hope of Israel. If then, further, Peter expects first of all the conversion of all Israel, and views this conversion in connection with a return of the dispersed to their sacred centre, this is assuredly no greater offence against the law of the Spirit, than the fact that he thinks of the progress of the further development of the Kingdom of God in conformity with those preparatory circumstances which God himself had arranged and disposed, so that the Kingdom of God should adapt itself to those historical conditions and relations which had been marked out for it. Apart from this consideration that this conception was founded strictly on the words of the prophet Joel, the Apostles had also by their Lord's last instructions been referred to the abiding importance of the people of Israel, and their divinely chosen centre, from which the Kingdom of God was to develope itself (see i. 4, viii. 12). Such a representation can only be justly named Ebionitic or Judaical, when the people of Israel, as such, or Jerusalem merely, in its purely external nature, as Jerusalem, is made to be of importance for the Kingdom of God. But how far Peter was from so doing is brought clearly enough before our minds by the words with which he closes his exhortations to the Jews. "Save yourself," says he, "from this untoward generation," ver. 40. By them he characterizes the present race of Jews, not only by its moral perversity generally, but also by that which he actually sees before him—Israel, as such, appears to him untoward, and consequently doomed to that destruction with which Joel has menaced the last days. The only possible means of deliverance is for each one to separate himself entirely from this general perversion. This steady glance at the existing perversity of Israel is in itself a sufficient proof that his hope of Israel's restoration was wholly free from any carnal admixture.

Now, this answer and address therefore, touching as it did upon the keenly felt need and requirements of the Jews, had

an extraordinary effect, namely, three thousand Jews were baptized. Since speaking of these, it is said "they were added," we must no doubt regard the original band of disciples as the stable and permanent foundation; but in this expression there is also involved the fact that, by the rite of baptism, the hitherto excluded Jews were placed on perfect equality with the disciples. It is from this point of view also that the newly received are described to us. Since, from this small beginning, the assembly felt itself suddenly advanced to so extraordinary an enlargement, the question may be asked, did then the whole community necessarily assume from this moment a different shape? The original form of the assembly of disciples was that of one family. The Lord was their householder, and His disciples His household (vid. Matt. x. 26; John xiii. 18), and it had been intimated to them that this form was to continue (vid. Luke xxii. 30). It is therefore no wonder that the disciples maintained this form. It is in this light that we must look upon them, when assembled together, during the period of expectation, and also on the morning of the day of Pentecost. By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit this form of community and fellowship had been fully confirmed and consecrated;—the spirit which had descended on them had created them anew. It is, however, one and the same spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ; they are therefore children of one and the same spirit, and brethren one to another, and accordingly form, in perfect truth, one household. Since therefore those who had been baptized, had become partakers of the same spirit, and this impression outweighs every other, they therefore must also be received into the same form of fellowship. For this is essentially the signification of the description which follows of the actual condition of the community as affected by its recent increase (vers. 42—47). Of the baptized the first thing that is asserted is, that they applied themselves diligently to the Apostles' teaching. The want of instruction was that which formed a distinction between the newly baptized and the original, first disciples; the knowledge of the latter had been promoted by their intercourse with the Lord and their long communication with each other—the former had as yet received nothing more than a summary of the whole doctrine as given in the testimony of St Peter. At most they had but

attained to the spirit of the household ; they had yet to learn its language and its manners. Their first duty, therefore, is to strive, by means of the instruction of the Apostles, to become equal to the rest. It is therefore easy to understand that, as seems to follow from ver. 44—46, the three other points which, ver. 42, are predicated of the baptized, were common to them with the others. The first thing, namely, that is further mentioned with respect to them, with especial prominence, is their zealous adherence in the *κοινωνία*. By some, as for instance Neander and Meyer, this word is understood in a general sense, and taken to signify nothing more than a brotherly fellowship. But it makes against such an interpretation that each of the three other nouns to which the participle *προσκαρτεροῦντες* applies, indicates something perfectly special. This circumstance leads us therefore to the sense of a communion of gifts of charity—which is supported by Rom. xv. 26 ; and Heb. xiii. 16 (see Mosheim, Kühnöl, Olshausen). For as to what Meyer objects, " that this special sense must either be conveyed by special limitation or be undoubtedly enforced by the context," however just the objection may be on the whole, still it does not apply to the passage in question. For although indeed we have here no special clause as in Rom. xv. 26, yet the context is as satisfactory here as it is in Heb. xiii. 16. For while the other three nouns have a special signification, we are told in ver. 44, 45, that the distribution to the necessity of the saints, forms an universal and characteristic feature of the early Church. If therefore, in speaking of the faithful, it is said—they were together and had all things in common ; Neander, with perfect justice, thus explains it : " The first Christian community constituted one family, and the force of the newly-awakened feeling of Christian brotherhood, the feeling of a common grace of salvation so powerfully outweighed all other personal aud ordinary feelings, that it brought every other consideration in subjection to this new and important relation " (see Gesch. d. Planz. u. Leit. d. christl. Kirche durch. die Apos. 1, 30.) And that the common participation in the Holy Spirit, which, within the circle of the faithful, must have created a feeling of family in the highest sense would, and necessarily did, cause not only human selfishness but even the divinely ordained principle of property to yield to a true and actual community of possession,

has been well shown by Göschel (see his Zerstreute Blätter i. 42—45; 57—59.) So long as we view the community of property in this natural light, all is simple and intelligible. But as soon as we suppose this community to have been of the nature of an institution which, as Meyer expresses it, the Apostles may either have been persuaded or intimidated into counselling or introducing, all becomes difficult and inconceivable. And is there really anything of so artificial and legally constituted a character asserted in our narrative? Neander, it is true, does think that the narrative before us and the parallel passages in iv. 34, 35, do really imply far more than he feels justified in inferring from that feeling of universal brotherly love here spoken of. And he has thereby afforded Baur (see Paulus p. 31), Zeller (Theolog. Jahrb. 1849, 35), grounds for accusing our text of obscurity. I, for my part, see no reason to force us to go beyond the limits we have assigned. Both here and also in 4 cap. the principal point is this very circumstance "that they had all things in common." That the former feelings, associated with private property had disappeared, was especially manifested by the existence of needy persons within the Christian community. A condition of want was within this circle an inequality not to be borne, and naturally, least of all, by those who had tangible possessions such as houses and lands (see iv. 34). With these, under the influence of the feeling of common-brotherhood, it became, as it were, an inner necessity to remove such a striking and offensive inequality by relieving those who were in want. Not for a moment that thereby the external disparity was externally and mechanically got rid of, but on every occasion it is said "they parted to all according as every man had need" (see xxiv. 45, iv. 35.) One would have thought that these words did intimate clearly enough the degree to which this external equalisation had been carried; but Baur and Zeller absolutely persist that what is meant is that in the community at Jerusalem all rights of property were in the strict sense of the word abolished. He, however, who asserts that ὅσοι must be understood as implying that even every father of a family who possessed a house or a field for the necessary maintenance of his family is to be included among these κτήτορες, and who thus designedly fortifies himself against the inference to be drawn from other passages of the same author which explains

the word ὅσοι—the object of such a person cannot be to furnish a commentary, but rather to produce a mystification.

The third characteristic that is noticed with respect to the baptized is the breaking of bread. The communion of the Lord with his disciples may very properly be characterised as an eating and drinking at His Table (vid. John xiii. 18 ; Luke xxii. 30), and the manner of breaking of bread was in the Lord's case so peculiar and characteristic that the disciples who, after his resurrection, had recognised Him neither by His form nor in His discourse, immediately knew Him upon His breaking bread with them (see Luke xxiv. 30, 31, 35). This mode of communion was thereby consecrated ; and appears as the proper medium for a community which lived together as one family. On this account the breaking of bread in fellowship was daily repeated, and by this means the community assumed the appearance of a number of equals eating in fellowship at the same table. And these elements of communion are represented as the results of an exalted state both of mind and feeling. Every such meeting at the same table for the common meal must have brought before the whole assembly a vivid recollection of Jesus sitting at the table with His disciples. But it was not merely the memorial of the previous communion of the disciples with each other, it was also a further continuance thereof ; for the present assembly rested on the same basis as the former ;—nay, it was rather the ennobling of the former, since the spirit of brotherhood which alone rightly completes the form, had now, for the first time, become really present and effectual. Or perhaps that which was the best of all was wanting ? For now there not any longer present in the midst of His disciples and brethren, the Lord Himself who, with His own hands, had broken bread for them all, and on whose bosom John had leaned. Yet how should He be wanting to them ? For it was even He who had bestowed upon them this spirit of brotherly love, and who gives it power on every occasion of their assembling together to triumph over all natural distinctions and contracts. He is invisibly present with them in every assembly. He it is who even now offers and consecrates the bread of brotherly communion, which, but for Him, would not be there, and which, to all the poor especially, would palpably be wanting. And had not the Lord provided that this His presence should come home

still more effectually and powerfully to their consciences? As often as the disciples met together and sat down to their common meal, so often must they have recalled the similar and never to be forgotten meeting with Jesus, but naturally above all other that last most solemn and most blissful occasion before the coming on of the night of Agony. Amid such lively recollections, however, there must have distinctly occurred to their minds all that Jesus had said and done at the end of their last common meal, when He blessed the bread and the cup, and named the one His body and the other His blood, and gave also power to His disciples to renew His act. Whenever therefore the disciples sat together at one table and ate of the one bread and rejoiced both in their own fellowship and in the unseen presence of their Lord in the midst of them, then in the retrospect of that blessed past one thing alone was still wanting, namely, the bodily presence and society of their Lord. This holy need of their love to the Lord was met by the authority, accorded to them at that farewell supper, of blessing bread and wine, and of eating and drinking in the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ.

In this way may be explained the ancient combination of the lovefeasts with the Lord's Supper. Thus alone also the conflicting expositions of commentators, of whom some see in the present passage no mention of aught beyond the Agapæ, while others see in it the Eucharist, appear reducible to their true measure and proportion. That by the breaking of bread we ought to understand nothing less than this solemn and eucharistic act, is implied, not merely by the special prominence which is given to the mention of this peculiarity, but also to the express remark that the breaking of bread was joined "with great gladness," (ἀγαλλίασις), with childlike "singleness of heart" and "praising of God," (vv. 46, 47).

When now, lastly, the perseverance in prayers is mentioned, both the plural and the context also lead us to the conclusion that we are to understand thereby regular recurring acts of worship, and just as the three other characteristics which are given of the conduct of those who had been baptized derived their fullest explanation from the historical context, so does the fourth also. The necessity of prayer in their case is made clear by the words which St Peter had quoted from Joel. According to the

prophet, in the extremity of the last days, salvation is made to depend upon the calling on the name of the Lord. So far was Baptism from having relieved the Jews from this necessity that, on the contrary, this rite had brought them into a condition which alone enabled them duly to perform this invocation. But wherefore must such prayer be made at fixed and set times? Joel had mentioned the Mount Sion as the only refuge in their extreme need. This fact, being combined with that of calling on the Lord as the only means of salvation, implies the necessity that this invocation should be made upon the Holy Mountain in the Holy City. But such prayer on the holy place had had from of old its three appointed times (see Ps. lv. 18; Dan. vi. 11) every day (see Winer, Biblischer Reallexicon 1. 398), and there existed no reason why the baptized Jews should discontinue this general pious custom. If then this is what the *προσευχαί* here mean, then again it is natural to suppose that the original disciples joined alike in them. And, in fact, the regular daily attendance in the Temple, which is asserted of all the Christians (ver. 46), is the more to be understood of prayer, since soon afterwards (ver. 31) it is expressly and prominently said of Peter and John that they were going to the Temple at the usual hour of Prayer.

It is quite in keeping if St Luke in this account of the growth of the Church considers it necessary to notice, though briefly, the impression which this proceeding had made upon the whole people. On this point he makes two remarks :—first, that fear had come upon every soul (ver. 43); and secondly, that the community found favour with all the people (ver. 47). And such are even the impressions which the whole event was calculated to leave on all thoughtful minds. The coming of the last times, accompanied with the solemn announcement that the period thus begun was a final one, must awaken fear in all who did not shut their hearts against the power of the event and of the word; while, secondly, the existence in this last time of a community which lived together in brotherly love and harmony, in heartfelt joy and enthusiasm, and which, with a sacred and blissful joy exulted in its own existence, must also have awakened a feeling of benevolence wherever the slightest interest for love and holiness was to be found. Consequently, there is here ascribed to the whole body of the people, a favourable disposition towards

this beginning of the Church; a feeling not to be wondered at, since Israel had been created expressly for the purpose of recognizing and preaching the works of the Lord. For so it was that the voice of John in the wilderness, as well as Jesus on His first appearance, exercised an irresistible influence on the whole nation. Only it must now be asked whether this vague sense of alarm and good-will is to work itself out to the same definiteness and effectual operation which we have witnessed in the case with the three thousand, or is, on the contrary, to be suppressed under opposing influences.

§ 6. THE FIRST MIRACLE.

(Chap. iii.)

While the alarm at the fearful horrors of the last days was spreading among the whole people, we are told (see ii. 43) that many signs and wonders were done by the Apostles. Thus, then, amid an universal fear of the hostile threatening powers, the Church was set forth as the place where all disturbing and opposing influences might be restrained and overcome. It was requisite, however, that this character of the community should be declared to the whole people by a special and public miracle, that if by any means the people might be moved to faith in Jesus by this new revelation of salvation in the Church. For their number, it is true, increased daily; but those who were added to it were only individuals (see ii. 27). It is natural that the first public miracle that was put forth for such a purpose should be fully recounted, and that, in addition, a statement should also be made of what was thereby effected for the further development of the history now opening upon us.

In the first place, the locality where the miracle was performed is distinctly brought before our notice. This locality is the precincts of the Temple (see v. 2); the holy mount, consequently, which (in the passage which, since the day of Pentecost, had become so well known and familiar) had been pointed out by the prophet Joel as the place of safety and refuge. Here, in this very place, the name of Jesus displayed its wonder-working

and blessing-bringing power on the poor cripple (ver. 6). Here took place the practical confirmation of the first preaching of Peter, in which he shewed that the name which, in Jerusalem, must be called upon for deliverance and salvation, is no other than the name of Jesus Christ. There is, however, still another point involved in this miracle, which is this, that the name of Jesus Christ is not only powerful over the spiritual but also over the external world. The people who, at the appointed hour of prayer, were assembled in great numbers on the mountain of the temple, could and ought to have perceived in this public miracle the proof of the will and the might of Jesus Christ to restore, with the same miraculous power which he had just displayed before their eyes, and to make joyful, his poor and sin-bound people, who have no more power to help themselves than this cripple had.

But in truth, as the restoration of the lame man was not performed totally without conditions, so also the restoration of Israel was not to be unconditional; and from what was done in the case of the cripple, Israel was to discern what they ought to do in order to experience the benefit of the miraculous energy of Jesus. And it is even to indicate this that the whole matter is narrated to us with such minuteness of detail.

As the Apostles were entering into the Temple the lame man, after his customary manner, without looking up, asked an alms of them (vv. 2, 3). When, therefore, Peter had scanned him closely, and when, as he had nothing to give him, the idea of working on him a miracle had occurred to his mind, he bade him look up. Upon this circumstance Meyer justly remarks, "The Apostle wished to see his countenance in order to judge whether he was deserving of his kindness." When, then, in obedience to the command, the lame man looked up on the Apostles, Peter perceived, in his general character, a fitness for the exercise of his miraculous benevolence. Of this fitness, however, he wishes to be still further convinced. Accordingly he says to him first of all "silver and gold have I none;" and naturally, by these words, he completely dashed the beggar's expectation, which, although from the whole context it is easily conceived, is yet mentioned and expressly recorded by Luke for the sake of perspicuity. What Peter hereupon offers him has a value only so

far as the lame man may feel disposed to attach a value to the Apostles and to the name which Peter is about to pronounce. If in his eyes the persons of the Apostles, evidently as poor as himself, are as nought, and the name of Jesus Christ as compared with his lameness of forty years' duration is a mere breath, in that case he will turn away the more decidedly and the more angrily when he finds himself so bitterly deceived in his expectation of receiving alms. Peter, however, who sees in him no trace of such aversion, stretches out his hand, and behold! the lame man also reaches his right hand out to him (ver. 7). In perfect agreement with this gradually developed susceptibility of the cripple, is the altogether child-like joy, the loud praising of God, and the grateful attendance on the Apostles, which was exhibited by the restored cripple (vv. 8—10). When, therefore, in the two parallel clauses, we find Peter twice naming faith, as the cause of the cure, I do not see any way of getting rid of a charge of tautology, otherwise than by referring that faith which is mentioned on the second occasion, to the lame man; and understanding the words ἡ πίστις ἡ δι' αὐτοῦ as designating the faith which, upon the faithful utterance of His name, was wrought in the lame beggar by Jesus himself.

And what position now does Israel assume relatively to this miracle thus worked on the Holy Mountain, and so full of consolation and admonition? Unquestionably their attention is roused in no common degree. But, still, it is necessary that Peter should address those who are present, and, taking advantage of such a miraculous excitement of their attention, endeavour by his discourse to lead them into the right path. In the first place, he reproves them for their unmeaning and bewildered astonishment at the miracle (ver. 12). And thereby he evidently intimates, that every one who stood in the right position to view the fact, can really have no cause for feeling surprise at the miracle he sees, since to such an one it must appear to be but the result of a due order of things. The question, therefore, implies the reproach that his listeners had never allowed themselves to take the proper position for forming a right judgment of these matters. He then endeavours to direct their attention from the human organs of the miraculous operation. For he points to that series of providences in which this fact does but hold its own place, and

thereby attempts to assist them in arriving at the right point of view. He goes back to the beginning of the sacred history of Israel; to the times of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; and sets forth the miracle as the act of the God of the Patriarchs, the fathers of Israel (ver. 13).

Since, from the very first, we have seen in the wonder thus wrought on the lame man upon the Holy Mountain a sign for Israel, it is unlikely that we should feel any surprise at this solemn reference to the God of the Patriarchs. For all that is ever effected for the salvation of Israel is to be referred back to this primary beginning. "This work of God is designed," continues Peter, "to glorify Jesus His servant" (παῖς θεοῦ, according to Nitzsch. Studien und Kritik, 1828, 331, עבד־יהוה.) The name and the idea of the "servant of God" meets us most distinctly in the so-called second part of Isaiah (see Isaiah xli. 8, xlviii. 20, xlix. 3, 5, 6, lii. 13, liii. 11, liv. 17.)

The servant of Jehovah is, therefore, he who accomplishes the work that Jehovah has appointed for him on earth. This accomplishment of the work of God is not effected, however, without the most profound and most ignominious suffering of the servant himself. And it is only after he had passed through these sufferings that he could carry out to its external manifestation and to its glorious end this work of God for Israel and for the heathen. The designation of Jesus as given by the Old Testament is here therefore fully to the point. The form in which the memory of Jesus floated before the minds of the assembled Jews is that very same form of humility and suffering which Isaiah attributes to the servant of God. And yet the miracle, which had been wrought simply by the name of Jesus, points to one who is to change Israel's bondage into freedom and power, and Israel's need into joy and exultation. This, therefore, forms the other aspect of the person of that servant of Jehovah who is finally to restore Israel to freedom and to glory.

Evidently then it is Peter's great purpose to place distinctly before them the relation in which the Jews already stood to Jesus. He therefore describes the form of suffering under which Jesus had appeared, expressly for the purpose of bringing home to the consciences of those present the part they had had in His humiliation (vv. 14—15). It is obviously his object to direct

the attention of the Jews to their guiltiness with regard to Jesus. With this object in view, it did not suffice merely to direct them to Jesus as the servant of God under His twofold aspect; he must also try to bring their minds to a right tone, and to place them in the due relation towards Him, who was their Saviour and Redeemer. For (as our narrative has set forth so circumstantially and forcibly), it was only by submitting to be brought into the right position relatively to the name of Jesus that the lame man had been translated into so blissful and so glorious a state. It was not to discourage them, but rather to bring about a change of heart, that with such bitter words Peter reproached them with their malice towards Jesus. For Peter remembered how the Lord had prayed for His enemies in the words "they know not what they do." (Luke xxiii. 34). He knew that Jesus had specially asserted the possibility of forgiveness of every offence against Himself as the Son of Man (Matt. xii. 32). This hope of forgiveness Peter holds out to those present, and exhorts them to put off their former enmity and to adopt a new frame of mind (ver. 19). But as, on the present occasion, Peter had not, as at Pentecost, smitten consciences and pierced hearts to deal with, he cannot make his exhortation either as brief or as summary as on that occasion he did. He had, however, no less clear a perception of the mental state of his present than of his former hearers. Even as then he well knew both how to heal and how keenly to wound their susceptible hearts, so now, with equal wisdom and circumspection, he understands how to lead to the right point those who are lost in blind astonishment at the wonderful miracle they had seen performed. He had clearly pointed out to the Jews the necessity of a change of heart as regarded Jesus, the servant of the Lord. Of what then must this change consist? In ignorance, he told them, they had given way to the cruelty they had been guilty of against Him. Wherein consisted this ignorance? In this, that they had formed ideas of their own concerning the servant of God, and had expected and desired of Him first of all and above all other things that which they held to be their greatest need—deliverance from a foreign yoke, and the restoration of their power and glory; and they were not aware that the servant of Jehovah was not, as an iron-sceptred King, to go on warring against the heathen, but meek and patient as a lamb for

sacrifice, and like it also in this respect, that its object was to satisfy a want in Israel, and a want indeed which, although less felt, was nevertheless far deeper and more important than the former. Does not the lame beggar here again recur to our mind? He desired alms of Peter and John; his least important wants are alone present to his mind; and even when Peter looked so significantly on him, he still thought of nothing else but of receiving alms. His far graver need, the recovery of the use of his feet, was so far from occupying his thoughts that even the proximity and sight of men endowed with such wonderful gifts and powers availed not to awaken in him such reflections. In like manner Israel desired the lesser good of a deliverance from the Roman yoke, and would exact this of their Saviour and His messengers, without as yet being brought by their warning voices to a serious thought of their own inward weakness and bondage even from their mother's womb (see ver. 2). As alms were withheld from the beggar, so to Israel was all change in its external condition denied; but the deliverance of the soul in bondage to sin from its birth is offered and held out to the people, if, like the cripple, they will trust in the name of Jesus Christ.

Now, in the discourse wherein Peter enters more minutely into the peculiar mental state of the Jews around him, he gives especial prominence to the fact, that the prospect of that which they most ardently longed for is by no means to be taken away from them. He addresses them by the name of Israelites (ver. 12); and, as this name is a guarantee for the fulfilment of all the promises made to Israel, it is consequently very far from his intention to deny in any way or to abridge the external accomplishment of their history as a nation. Indeed, the miracle performed on the cripple contains also an allusion to that external power, which Jesus shall some day reveal in the case of Israel, and on the Holy Mountain. But the more Peter is conscientiously anxious to concede to the Jews all their privileges, so much the more does he feel it incumbent on him to lay their duties plainly before them. He effects both by rigidly adhering to the Holy Scriptures, which he either brings before them in a compendious summary, or else comments on them, and applies under two principal points of view. He observes merely in

general, that all the prophets who had spoken, from Samuel (with whom the period of the priestly rule closes, and the Word of God begins to make use of the prophets as His organs), had foretold the coming of these days (ver. 24). What the Apostle meant by "these days" is clear from ver. 17, where he makes the beginning of them to be coincident with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Consequently, it was not Joel alone, but all the prophets, that had spoken of these "last times." And the two declarations which he expressly applies to the present times, are adduced from the earliest times—the times of Moses and the times of Abraham. We may draw from hence the conclusion that, according to this intimation, the prophecies throughout the Old Testament history refer invariably to these last days. Then, however, it becomes the more certain that what the prophets say with respect to the future temporal fortunes of Israel does not belong to any earlier period, but even to these same last days. If, therefore, this final æra begins with the event of Pentecost, or with the preaching of the Gospel (vide Matt. i. 11), it becomes a remarkable fact that, of all the external events which the prophetic word of the Old Testament sets forth as so important and overpowering, that often it can speak of nothing else, little or nothing should have been realised up to that time. But on a closer consideration it becomes evident that events which the prophets view concurrently, and join together in their predictions, in the fufilment detach themselves from one another and come to pass separately. Even in his first discourse, Peter was far from regarding it as inconsistent with the character of this final period, that, when it had once begun, a gradual development should take place (see ii. 39). But since the augmentation of the community had been effected exclusively by the accession of individuals, this view of the time before him, in its relation to these prophecies, must have unfolded itself more and more clearly to his mind. Now he no longer characterises the last days as an unbroken continuity. On the contrary, he brings prominently forward distinct epochs and æras. *Καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως* and *χρόνοι ἀποκαταστάσεως*, which he describes as future, and which, as regards their occurrence, he makes to be dependent on certain conditions. —As to the *καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως*, it is easily seen that we must thereby understand something which cannot be regarded as yet

present. Not that for the community and its members a time of rest and refreshing had not yet arrived, for we find the very contrary in the narrative of the breaking of bread; but that which happens to some few thousands, while the rest of the world remains unaffected thereby, cannot be regarded as the characteristic of the term, *καιροὶ*, which, when not restricted by the context, always refer to influences affecting the history of the whole world (see Luke xxii. 24; Acts xvii. 26; Ephes. i. 20; 1 Thess. v. 17). This will become more evident when we have established that which we have already presupposed, that viz. the *χρόνοι ἀποκαταστάσεως* and the *καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως* are coincident. If *ἀποκατάστασις*, what is generally without further proof assumed, implied only a definitive and external restoration into a former condition, this coincidence would be at once established. For then the *χρόνοι* would, as explicitly as the *καιροί*, be distinguished from the present; in which nothing of such an external restoration can be traced. But with equal propriety, and in truth in a very significant passage, namely (Matt. xvii. 11) *ἀποκαθιστάναι* is used of an internal and moral restoration, and in this sense we may well assert that the *χρόνοι ἀποκαταστάσεως* had already begun, and would have their course. If, indeed, the preposition *ἄχρι* has invariably the same force as the German "bis," and in every case marks the commencement of a definite period of time as a limit, then again we should have in it a further reason for combining it as we do with *καιροι*, for then the coming on of these *χρόνοι* would likewise be removed into the future. But it cannot be denied, that *ἄχρι* also signifies the conclusion of a period of time as a limit; for, even if many of the passages adduced by Bengel in proof of this cannot be considered as conclusive, it is impossible to explain away the two following (Acts xx. 6; Heb. iii. 13). It is then accordingly possible to conceive the *χρόνοι ἀποκαταστάσεως* and the *δει οὐρανὸν δέξασθαι*, as running parallel, but the *καιρὸι ἀναψύξεως* as preceding. However, this is at most but a possible meaning of the verb *ἄχρι*; at all events this signification is but an abnormal one, and the adoption of it must be strictly determined by the context. Now, this is so little the case in the passage before us, that everything leads to the very opposite conclusion. Even of itself the term *ἀποκατάστασις* carries us to this inference. For

even though in the Biblical phraseology, this term may be applied to an internal and moral restoration, still we must not overlook the fact, that, in the book before us we have already been made acquainted with it in a very important passage, and in a context of precisely similar a character, where it is used in the very opposite sense (see i. 16). It is true that the additional limitation *πάντων* which we here meet with, has been left in the greatest uncertainty, having been referred to every possible thing, to human nature, and to everything else, and thereby the object of *ἀποκαταστάσεως* being pretty far removed from the *βασιλεία τοῦ Ισραήλ*. But in fact there is really no ground for this uncertainty with relation to *πάντων*, for the relative *ὧν* refers without doubt to *πάντων*, and not, as Meyer thinks, to *χρόνων*. For, in the first place, *πάντων* stands nearest to it; and secondly *τοὺς χρόνους λαλεῖν* is a combination utterly untenable, for, owing to the slight causal force which belongs to the word *λαλεῖν* wherever it is followed by an object, the latter must as nearly as possible, adapt itself to the idea of speaking; but this is certainly not the case with *χρόνοι*, as we see plainly from ver. 24, where the synonym *τὰς ἡμέρας ταύτας* appears to be dependent not upon *ἐλάλησαν* but upon *κατήγγειλαν*—a fact which Meyer has altogether overlooked. The case is very different with the combination *πάντων, ὧν*; if, that is to say, what is said is "all that they have asserted," for then it is easy from the noun *ἀποκαταστάσεως* to supply the verbal idea *ἀποκατασταθήσεσθαι*. But whatever the prophets spoke of in connection with a *ἀποκατάστασις* admits easily of being comprised under the single idea of the *βασιλεία τοῦ Ἰσραήλ*. Since therefore the word *ἀποκατάστασις* here appears to be combined with the same object as in i. 6, we are consequently bound to take it in the same acceptation. And we are confirmed in the correctness of this view by the fact that this interpretation enables us to leave the terms *καιροὶ* and *χρόνοι*, which we find placed pretty frequently together, in their ordinary relation of affinity, and consequently to regard both in precisely the same point of view as they appear to stand in the important passage in i. 6. That, however, which gives the stamp of certainty to this interpretation of *ἀποκατατάστασις* and to this combination of *καιροὶ* and *χρόνοι*, is the agreement of the whole series of ideas here opened out, with the informa-

tion afforded, at the very beginning, to that question of the Apostles which is given in i. 6.

The coming of the times of refreshment is according to (ver. 20) to be coincident with the mission of "Jesus Christ, ordained for you." This" sending is explained by the words which the Angels addressed to the Apostles on Mount Olivet at the time of the ascension—"Even as he has gone up," said they, "in like manner will he again return" (i. 11.) It could hardly have escaped the Apostles at the time, that this return of Jesus would be coincident with the period of the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. Now, however, it has become a matter of certainty with them. But here a new element has come in; namely, that this second coming is to be regarded as the true coming. And it is simply for this reason that so little heed is here given to His first coming that the second is spoken of absolutely by ἀποστείλῃ; for Jesus Christ is spoken of as προκεχειρισμένος in order to indicate that at this coming He will perform all those things for the sake of which He was preordained for Israel. In a word, we have here all at once exactly the same mode both of view and expression as prevails in the Old Testament, according to which only one mission is announced, which is to bring about the true accomplishment of the history of Israel (comp. Rom. xi. 26). And it is now in perfect conformity with this view that it is further stated that this Jesus Christ must be received into the Heavens until the times of refreshing or of restoration shall arrive. Externally considered, this retiring into the Heavens is a disappearance and ceasing to be. It is therefore quite in keeping if the Old Testament economy, the views of which are directed exclusively to the external and the actual, takes no notice of this period of withdrawing and ceasing to be as regards external actuality. But even so much the graver becomes the importance of this period for the New Testament economy. For it is He who has been exalted into the Heavens that has poured out the Spirit (see ii. 23), and that has thereby, however invisible, laid the only sure and eternal foundation for all external forms and realisation. But as Peter is not able, without further explanation, to appeal to the experience thus vouchsafed to himself and his brother Apostles with a view of influencing his hearers, he in consequence alleges, from the Old Tes-

tament, such passages as were adapted to impress most forcibly on the perception of the Jews, the importance of the fact of the present retirement of Jesus Christ into the heavens. According to the context, we have to consider the words of Moses "of a prophet like unto himself," as one particular proof of the assertion, that a restoration had been predicted by the prophets, to which single proof the general assertion in ver. 23 is attached by means of καὶ. It becomes now a question: How far do the words of Moses treat of the prophet of the restoration? We must bear in mind that Moses, when he addressed these words to the people, had long learned that the development of Israel would not procced in a direct line; but would be interrupted by a general state of defection (see Theolog. comment. zu. A. T. 1. 1. p. 89, 90). That he looks forward to such a time of extremity is clear from a comparison of the prophet with himself. The peculiar function of Moses, namely, was by means of the word of Jehovah, to lay the first foundation of a general order in Israel; consequently, before another, like unto Moses, can appear, the system founded and established by Moses, must be broken up. The prophet therefore, like untoMoses, is the Restorer (see Theol. Comment. 1. 2). But this Restorer is not described as a king, but he is to be as Moses, a prophet. It is not the sword that is to restore Israel, but the word, and the position taken relatively to the word of this future prophet, will, it is declared, absolutely determine the fate of every Israelite—"Every soul which will not hearken to the word of this prophet shall be rooted out from the people." He therefore who will not hearken to this prophet shall have no part in the restoration of Israel. The application was so obvious that Peter could well leave it to his audience to make it.

If then Peter again loudly proclaims in their ears the prerogatives of Israel in regard to the proffered salvation, and designates those whom he addresses as the sons of the prophets, and of the divine Covenant, he employs these terms yet once more in the hope of riveting their attention on the indispensable conditions of salvation, and on the grave importance of the present time. It is with perfect truth, that the Apostle adduces the promise "and in thy seed shall all the nations of the Earth be blessed," as comprising God's covenant with the Patriarchs. For this promise evidently expresses the ultimate prospect raised

in the minds of the Patriarchs; and this very promise is thrice repeated to Abraham, and given once to each of the others (see Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 18; xxvi. 4; xxviii. 14.) And it is equally correct, in an historical point of view, if in this promise which sets in so strong a light the universal importance of Israel, Peter discovers an implication which has reference to the moral condition of that people.

For this blessing, which is to come from Abraham, through his people, upon all the nations of the Earth, is preceded by the blessing which is to come upon Abraham and his seed (see Gen. xii. 2). But now, if, as is asserted in Gen. xii. 2, even this derivatory blessing, which is to come upon all nations, is dependent on the fitness of the nations for its reception, how much more must this be the case as regards the original blessing which Abraham and his descendants are to receive directly from God? Indeed, the first word of Jehovah, which laid the foundation of this blessing, begins with a requisition on his will. It is obvious that St Peter views the matter in such a light as to conclude that the time has at length come in which the promised blessing is to pass upon all nations. For it is the existing race of Abraham that are called upon to become the instruments of its dispensation. But before this can be done, the race of Israel must itself become partakers of the blessing. The dispenser of this blessing is, however, none other than Jesus himself, who gives a new Spirit, and brings deliverance from the sins of the old man. And it is precisely the dispensing of that blessing that constitutes the operation which Jesus performs from His invisible retirement in the heavens; for He had begun it in the case of His disciples while He sojourned on earth, and perfected it in them after withdrawing into the invisible depths of Heaven. When now Peter comes in conclusion to the mission of Jesus, whom he regards as still operating on earth (*εὐλογοῦντα* v. 26,) he completes what he had said on the subject in ver. 20; and while he speaks here of the present activity of Jesus, he animates (as it were) the representation he had given in ver. 21 of His residence in Heaven. For he represents, as parallel with this withdrawal of Jesus into the depths of Heaven, that blessing by which man in his inmost nature in converted from his sins (ver. 26); and if, in what precedes,

the chief stress is laid upon His second coming it is here made clear to the Jews that all the benefit is to be first drawn from Him, since the effects of the first advent furnish the necessary conditions for the work of the second. Herewith Peter again sets forth Jesus under the description of the servant of God, which he had employed almost at the very opening of his speech, and concludes his exortation to the Jews by entreating them to desist from their former hostility, and by giving themselves up to the spirit and the blessing which were ready to pour down upon them from heaven.

§ 7. THE FIRST HOSTILITY.

(Chap. iv. 1—22.)

Both the miracle wrought on the mount of the Temple, and also the discourse of Peter which it gave rise to, had revived a consciousness of the divine distination of the whole people of Israel. No doubt in the miracle itself, as well as in the address which interpreted it, great stress was laid upon the condition which Israel had to fulfill, before this design, the divine blessing of Israel, could be attained to. Will then Israel fulfil this condition or not? Hitherto there had been none but individual fulfilments of it. The nation at large had not as yet got beyond a salutary impression which it had received from the community. And even now also no decision is come to. While, on the one hand, the number of the disciples does, no doubt, increase considerably in consequence of the event we have just detailed, and of the impressive address which Peter had made on the occasion of it (ver. 4), yet in the present instance also there is nothing more than an accession of individuals, and so far, consequently, there is no real progress. On the other hand, a totally opposite feeling manifested itself on the same occasion, namely, an hostility to the preaching of the Apostles. However, on the day of Pentecost the wanton mockery of a few was overcome and put to silence by Peter coming forward. We must, therefore, regard what is here related as the first positive act of hostility which the Church had to experience. It is also clearly in this light that

our narrative places the matter, for from such a point of view alone, can the circumstantial details of the present section be accounted for.

Of those who took offence at the preaching of the Apostles three classes are described to us ; the priests, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees. Bengel remarks, that in each of these the source of this animosity is to be found in evil motives of a personal nature. The priests were displeased that men who had proceeded from no school should nevertheless take upon themselves the task of public teaching, and should, by so doing, appear to derogate from the dignity of the priestly office. (see Malachi ii. 7.) On the contrary, the captain of the Temple (on whose office see Lightfoot on Luke xxii. 4), instead of inquiring into the cause of the phenomenon, allows himself to be carried away by appearances, and sees in the excitement which the presence of the Apostles had caused among the people, symptoms of danger to public tranquillity. And finally, the Sadducees, who ought to have been converted from the error of infidelity by the evidence of the resurrection of Jesus, remained firm in their unbelief, and wished to put that conflicting testimony to silence. These men, of whom the greater part held office, and were of repute in Israel, had, before all others, a call to take to heart the mighty wonder and its impressive significance, and to lead the people along the path pointed out by the Apostles. But instead of fulfilling the duties of their station in Israel, they clung each one to his own prejudices, and allowed personal considerations to triumph over all that their rank and position demanded of them. Abusing the influence which had been given them in order that they might further and promote the Gospel, they cast the Apostles in prison.

Now this act of violence upon the Apostles rendered it necessary that a formal judicial decision should be passed on the question. And thereby it naturally would become apparent, whether the hostile tendency had its origin only in the peculiar tempers of certain individuals in authority, or had a more general and universal foundation. A solemn and formal meeting of the Sanhedrim is called (vv. 5—6.) In no other way could the matter be decided. For essentially the question to be decided was the

grave one, whether the Apostles were to be regarded as prophets of God or as seducers to idolatry (vid. Deut. xiii.). This, however, was a question which it belonged to the Sanhedrim to decide (see Winer Bib. Reallex. 11, 552). When now Bauer (see his Paulus p. 16), and Zeller (see Theolog. Jahrb. 1849, 59), consider the account given of the solemnity of the assembly as exaggerated, and therefore accuse it of being purposely falsified, this only proves that these scholars have no idea at all of that which has actually taken place, and are therefore quite incapable of appreciating the interest which both Luke himself would naturally take in the whole matter, and would therefore wish to excite in his readers. This defective view in both these critics is necessarily to be traced to their fragmentary method of criticising, which is invariably directed against the single details of our book. But, for our part, having learned, from the consistent course of our history up to this point, to see how in Israel everything had been bringing on the necessity of a decision of the matter, and when we now see the open hostility of Israel here manifesting itself for the first time against the preaching of the Apostles, we cannot but expect the present crisis to be looked upon as a moment of unwonted gravity. At the very outset St Luke seeks to impress us with the importance of the sitting, by giving us the names of four members of the Sanhedrim. Of these the two first are Annas and Caiaphas—names evidently of no good omen, for it was while these two high priests were in authority that the Gospel had begun its course (Luke iii. 2), and had ended so shamefully for Israel in the death of Jesus (John xviii. 13; Matt. xxvi. 3). It has been looked upon as a sign of a clumsy botching of the history that Annas is placed first and has alone the title of high priest assigned him (vid. Zeller ubi. S. 60). That, however, the title ὁ ἀρχιερεύς did apply to him, is an incontestible fact, while the circumstance that his name is placed first is justified both by his age and by his influence which reached far beyond the period of his office (vid. Winer ibid. 1, 60). We do not, it is true, find that Caiaphas was actually invested at this time with the office of high priest, and there is reason for supposing that Annas was the high priest of this year; but in truth there is not much difficulty in the matter, if it is a certainty

that Annas actually, even at this time, still exercised a dominant influence, just as he did when he conducted the arraignment of Jesus (see John xviii. 13.)

As to the *treatment of the Apostles by the Sanhedrim*, people are prone to start objections from not taking a clear view of the actual state of things before them. Surprise has been felt that the Sanhedrim, instead of entering into the doctrine of the Apostles, should discuss the miracle, which to the eyes of unbelief is so fatal. For this reason a wish has been shown to refer τοῦτο (ver. 7) against all rules of construction, not to the miracle but to the doctrine. But the miracle worked on the cripple, who was well known to every one, had been publicly performed, and was an event which the Sanhedrim could in nowise gainsay, as they themselves fully admit (ver. 16). Zeller, it is true, thinks that such an admission is a plain proof of the falsification of the history; for he argues, had the members of the Sanhedrim made such an acknowledgment, they must have yielded to a belief in the power of the name of Jesus. Zeller, however, does not reflect that infidelity, while its essence consists in opposing itself invariably to all facts that in any way tell against it, assumes different shapes at different periods, while in all alike it maintains its philosophical consistency. Modern infidelity, in the presence of such a miracle as is here related, would obstinately deny its possibility, but in the times of the Apostles, it did not venture upon such defiance of common sense and experience. When thus closely pressed, therefore, it fell back on the assertion that it was a miracle performed by demons (Matt. xii. 24). The possibility of a miracle so wrought had been beforehand considered in the law concerning the prophets, where the teaching of the prophets is set up for a criterion of its source. The Sanhedrim had evidently in their minds this, the fundamental law for such cases as that before them, and by its means they sought to prepare a snare for the Apostles, as they had more than once endeavoured to do for Jesus.

They knew well that the cripple had been cured by the Apostles in the name of Jesus; who therefore had substituted the name of Jesus for that of Jehovah. This could be easily made out to be a perverting to idolatry, since, as they were firmly convinced, the distinction between Jesus the crucified and the Almighty Jehovah

could not be denied; and thus they had here got the established test of false prophecy. This is the reason why, without any circumlocution, the Sanhedrim proceeds immediately to the question about the miracle; and why they caused the cripple who had been miraculously healed by the Apostles to be brought before them as well as the Apostles. All things in truth did not turn out exactly as they had expected; as we find to be the case on many similar occasions in the evangelical history.

Peter proceeds at once to answer the question put to him. When Peter addresses the Sanhedrim as the rulers and elders of Israel (ver. 8.), he gives them to understand that he speaks with a perfect consciousness of standing before his lawful superiors; and that he by no means wishes to call in question its competence to decide in all such matters. That this consideration is an important one for the right understanding of the whole narrative, is intimated by St Luke by the single word *αὐτῶν* (ver. 5). Meyer, for instance, has justly called our attention to the fact that this word can only refer to the faithful who had been mentioned ust before. We ought, therefore, in this account of the first conflict in which the Christian community in Jerusalem was engaged, to keep steadily in view that it was precisely the lawful authorities that first came forward in hostility to the Apostles. And it is even because the Sanhedrim was the natural head of the whole people, that Peter justly felt it an urgent duty in his position and on such an occasion to make as solemn a declaration as possible. He therefore answers the question put to him in such a manner as to provide against any perversion of his words, and to make the truth of what he said as impressive as he could. As on the first occasion of his standing up publicly, he felt that he was placed, as it were, before the whole people (ii. 36); so on the present occasion also he solemnly addresses his discourse to all Israel. He had already testified that the name which, according to the Prophet Joel, was in the last extremity to be called upon, was no other than the name of Jesus Christ. In a lively consciousness of the truth of this testimony, Peter stands forth once more; and under this conviction the healing of the lame man appears to him a *σωτηρία*, a salvation (*οὗτος σέσωσται*, ver. 9), and the miracle is to his mind a proof of the power of the name of Jesus to save from ruin. It is thus only that we can explain it, if Peter, in con-

clusion, sums up his whole confession with the assertion that in this person and in this name was involved the salvation for all Israel ver. 12.[1] Let us now turn once more to the question of the Sanhedrim. Peter acknowledges that the miracle had not been wrought in the name of Jehovah but in that of Jesus. At the same time, however, he solemnly avers that in the latter name rests the only hope of salvation for all men; that consequently this name is the essential presence of Jehovah, and therefore, that in the confession of Jesus, there is not involved the guilt of perverting to the worship of other gods. Peter however knew full well that there was one great obstacle in the way of his hearers feeling the full weight of his testimony—even the low estate of Jesus, which found its depth of humiliation in the fact that he had been formally and solemnly condemned to death by lawful authority. But immediately before his mind there floated a passage of Scripture which turned this hindrance into a furtherance of his cause, while it shewed that even such a stroke of deepest infamy was to form the unerring token of the eternal source of salvation (ver. 11).

The extraordinary boldness and confidence with which Peter made his confession confounded all the intentions and frustrated all the plans of the Sanhedrim. They cannot resist the feeling of astonishment, especially as at the same time they perceived that the Apostles were unlearned men and of the lower order ἰδιῶται (see Walch de paresia apostolorum idiotarum p. 68). In their astonishment, and while their attention was the more aroused, they recollect having seen both of them in the company of Jesus[2]. While therefore they regard the man that had been made whole with such unmeaning wonder, the fact of the miracle having been worked forces itself so strongly upon their mind that

[1] It is natural that some uncertainty should prevail concerning the signification of the word σωτηρία (see Walch disser. de unica salutis per Christum via. p. 9—11) when once the fundamental passage which determines this idea is lost sight of. As soon however as we regard this passage in its true import, the idea implied in σωτηρία here and in every place where any connection with this passage can be traced has a definite and incontrovertible meaning.

[2] If Bauer and Zeller had only reflected on the excellent remark of Meyer on these words ἐθαύμαζον ἐπεγίνωσκόν τε αὐτοὺς, "their wonder sharpened their recollection," they could have found no difficulty in this expression.

they cannot bring themselves to adjudge the Apostles to be false prophets.

Shall they therefore yield themselves to the faith? To this, indeed, they are still less disposed, as we see at once from their conferring among themselves ver. 17. The impression which the miracle and the discourse of Peter made upon them was, it is true, irresistible. The direction of their will, however, is so little changed thereby that their only desire is to find some means by which to prevent at all hazards the further preaching of the name of Jesus. So then with them this impression only served to confirm, more strongly, the evil in this hardening of their perverted will. With their own ears even had they heard the testimony that in the name of Jesus the only hope of salvation was given; and the force of this testimony weighed on their consciences—with their own eyes they had seen the palpable proof of the saving power of this name, and their own words testified that they could not deny the miracle; and yet they are resolved to put a stop to the preaching—nay, even the utterance of this name. In order to execute this resolve of their evil hearts, they in a solemn and formal assembly, agree together to put forth all the influence of their high office and authority.

We are, it must be confessed, too much accustomed to consider as a matter of indifference what a Jewish council should think or decide on matters of the Gospel. But this indifference arises on the one hand from the fact that we do not duly appreciate the position of these authorities in the external providences of the Kingdom of God; and secondly, that we are now in a position to see how the Lord, who is exalted to God's right hand, has regulated the issue—which, however, must have been as yet hidden from the Apostles. We cannot really become sensible of the grave importance of this decision until we recall some analogous cases from the circle of our own personal experience. What a shock to the mind, what perplexity, weakness, and want of faith would, in these days, shew themselves, if the highest authority in sacred things were to decide against the truth. How many are there not, at all times, who are disposed to maintain inviolate a respect for such an authority, which, they say, is indispensable for the general good, even though truth would in some degree suffer thereby! How few in such a case would maintain either internal certainty or even external firmness! And what is any sacred authority among ourselves

compared with the Sanhedrim of Israel in the first days after the Pentecost? This same Sanhedrim had, it is true, rejected Jesus; it is, however, asserted by St Peter that they had done so in ignorance; but that now a new thing was begun in Israel where it has found its instruments already prepared by God. But if now when the highest authority had for the first time formally to pronounce its judgment on this new thing, they of all others, should evince hostility to it; what in that case is to become of Israel? What is to be the fate of the Church which had to seek her natural anchorage and protection in the supreme governors of Israel, and elsewhere could not hope to find on the whole earth a resting place and stay?

The Apostles, who on several occasions had declared it to be the destination of Israel to work out the salvation of the whole earth, and had acknowledged the Sanhedrim as the legitimate authority in Israel, must have keenly felt the whole overwhelming weight of this decision of the high council of state. But even when we are most inclined to despond at the thought how by this decision the Church is suddenly cut short in the course of development pointed out for her by her God, and how perplexingly this event must operate on the whole of her future progress; a ray of light falls upon the soul, which reveals to us even in this crisis a majesty in the kingdom of the Spirit, which would never have found an opportunity to manifest itself in that smooth and regular progression, whose interruption we would however fain lament. As soon as St Peter and St John hear the decision of the Sanhedrim, they answer as with one voice, "Judge ye yourselves whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God" (ver. 19). What? is not the high Council the supreme authority ordained by God? How come they then to oppose the will of the council to the will of God? The voice of authority depends on an objective established order, as the Apostles had acknowledged, but whence are they sure of the voice of God? They appeal to their own consciences, while they say "we cannot" (ver. 20). We see consequently that the Apostles unquestionably regard the supreme council as an authority invested with divine dignity, but that still the divinely-appointed authority does not appear to them to be the incarnation of divine order. For, as soon as the members of

his high council begin to employ their official influence in order to carry out their own evil purposes, they thenceforth appear to the Apostles to be stripped of their divine dignity, and to be simply as other men. Without hesitation or delay, the Apostles oppose to this objective authority the subjective authority of their own conviction as established by the operation of the Holy Spirit. And since this happened in the first conflict of the Church with the highest earthly authority, we ought to recognize therein a principle. We should observe that the fundamental power of the Spirit is associated with a powerful earnestness, and this earnestness contains a wonderful regenerating power, capable of overcoming all worldly obstacles. In this consideration alone we find a compensation for the pain of remarking how human malice threatens to frustrate the divine intention which had shaped the high council of Israel for the establishment of the kingdom of God. For evil does unquestionably acquire both liberty and power to pervert a noble instrument of God originally designed for the furtherance of the kingdom of Jesus. But, while we might tremble to think what is now to become of the new-born Church, destitute as yet of all organisation, we yet see in the unshaken firmness of the Apostle a power of the Spirit which, as it rests upon itself, possesses in itself a sure guarantee for organisation beyond any, even the holiest and most divine institution that could be formed out of mere worldly elements.[1]

Moreover, by the conclusion of this part of the narrative, our attention is called to the fact that the present destination of Israel for the Kingdom of Jesus is by no means frustrated. By this decision of the Sanhedrim, it is expressly and prominently stated (ver. 24) that, whereas the governors of Israel were, through the miracle and its consequences, inflamed to hatred and persecution, the whole people glorified God for what had been done. In this case then holds good the remark of Bengel on

[1] It may be of use for our time, so difficult to rid itself of its prejudices on this head, to refer to a somewhat ancient treatise on this subject, that of Samuel Andrea, de limitibus obsequii humani, in the Sylloge Disputationum, ed. Hasæus et Ikenius ii. 594. Andrea, with all the precautions which he insists on against the abuse of the word in question, comes to the result specified above, and sets up the Christian conscience as the supreme court of appeal in all cases of collision with human authority.

this passage, "Sæpe populus est sanior quam qui præsunt." There is then even yet a possibility that the favourable opinion of the people will finally triumph over the hostility of its rulers. The further results must shew whether this change does take place in the instance before us, or whether the hostile initiative of the authorities against the Church will, as it had done in the history of our Lord, spread likewise to the people.

§ 8. THE TRIUMPHANT POWER OF THE CHURCH.

(Chap. iv. 23—37.)

As we have attempted, under the guidance of the history itself, to discover and to set forth the pervading importance which we must ascribe to the decision and measures taken by the Sanhedrim against the Apostles, we cannot feel the least astonishment if the report of these proceedings made an alarming impression on the community. From the council chamber of the hostile Sanhedrim we are transplanted into the midst of the Christian brotherhood. For that we are not to understand ἴδιοι either in the narrow sense of their household, as Olshausen takes it, nor even in the limited idea of fellow Apostles, as held by Meyer and De Wette, but that we must, with Kühnol, understand by this term the whole community, so far as they were present; of this we shall easily convince ourselves by two considerations. In the first place, the sense of the word ἴδιοι is, in the present narrative, defined by the obvious antithesis. The Apostles had just before been in the hands of the alien and hostile authorities of Judea; now their home, their own as opposed to them, could not have been aught else than the whole circle of the Christian community; just as in xxiv. 23. In the second place, it is impossible to suppose that the whole community took any but the liveliest interest in the fortunes of the two imprisoned Apostles, or that they ever lost sight of them. If, then, the Apostles, after their dismissal, felt it incumbent on them to make a report any where, surely none of the brethren would willingly have been absent from such a communication. To the assembled representatives of the Church, therefore, the narrative of the Apostles must at once have made

it clear what it was that was really at stake. They recognized in what the high priests and elders had said (εἶπον) not a mere casual or passing outbreak of hostility, or a mere impotent menace—but rather the very principle of the enmity of the powers of this world to the kingdom of God. The very names of Annas and Caiaphas at once bring before our minds that animosity towards Jesus in which both Jewish and heathen authorities had joined together and allied themselves. The Spirit, it is true, had been poured out on all flesh in Israel, and the hope might well arise in the community that by it all hatred also had been frustrated. The threats, however, of the Sanhedrim had now shewn that all such expectations were idle. But now, if the same sentiments towards the kingdom of Jesus should continue to exist in the authorities of Israel, how could any other disposition be looked for among those of the heathen world? The community therefore recognize in the threatening of the Sanhedrim a declaration of war on the part of the powers of the whole universe against the Church of Christ. And this universal hostility must have appeared to the community the more to be dreaded, the more they looked upon a world thus opposed not as an unorganized mass of individuals, but saw in the front of the hostile array those who were set to be heads of nations and lands, the princes and potentates of the earth. We have seen that in the decisive moment before the Sanhedrim the Apostles had exhibited wonderful firmness and self-possession; but will the whole community possess sufficient firmness to endure the overwhelming representation of their danger? We have seen the bold part which the Apostles exhibited openly in the face of the whole world, we must now watch the community in the sacred privacy of their inner life. When, in the place of the decaying authorities which had heretofore kept the world together, the Apostle set up the power of conscience, which was to found a new order of things in the world, we discern not the least shrinking in their whole nature. The community, in the midst of which we are now placed, are no doubt shaken; but it is the shaking of a tree by the wind, which only causes it to strike a firmer and deeper root into the ground. For no sooner have they become aware of the mighty shaking which is coming upon them from the world, than forthwith, with one accord, they lift up

their voices in prayer to God (ver. 24). Since this prayer has been handed down to us, and though commencing with the words of a Psalm, it yet assumes quite a special form and individual application, Zeller has pretended to see in this something quite inconceivable (vid. Theol. Jahrb. ubi. S. 61). Bengel, however, on ver. 24, long ago remarked: Petrus etiam hic verba, præivisse videtur sed ceteri quoque voce usi sunt; and if we adopt this conjecture, which in itself is very probable, and suppose that the whole community sang the words of the second Psalm and prayed, and that thereupon Peter made an application of this Psalm to their present contingency in the words which are here given, I do not see what can be urged against this supposition.

From the prayer which, in any case, is the expression of the unanimous feeling of the whole community, we observe that there are mainly two considerations which encourage the community under the violent shaking and the mighty pressure from without, and embolden them to pray with unshrinking confidence. The position which the authorities in Jerusalem had threatened to assume against the kingdom of Jesus, reminded them of David's song of triumph over the princes and the people who rose up against the Lord's annointed. That song of triumph sets forth in truth the vanity and nothingness of all enterprises, however powerful, against the will and the kingdom of Jehovah. It is from such passages of Scripture that the depressed spirits of the community must again take courage. But a second and still more powerful source of consolation was afforded to the assembled believers within the sphere of their own experience. For they themselves, indeed, had already experienced the futility of all worldly opposition to the kingdom of Christ, or, in other words, to the true fulfilment of those triumphant expressions in the Psalm in their largest sense. In the combination of all the public authorities against Jesus, that rebellion of the world against the Lord's annointed which David describes had, truly speaking, come to an outbreak. But then, indeed, a wicked rebellious world appears actually to have attained its end, since it had slain on the cross the object of its hatred. But the community knew better; they knew that the world, even while it carried into accomplishment its own evil purpose, had in fact done nothing

else than that which God had long before prepared and foreordained (ver. 28). With these thoughts the community becomes conscious of possessing in the operations of God a strength sufficient to overmaster all the powers of the world. Standing on the strong foundation of these two facts, the assembly confidently puts up its prayer to God—not for the destruction of the secular powers—not even for the removal of the danger, but for that internal victory over the threats and violence of the world by means of the free testimony to the divine word, and glorfying of the name of Jesus in the working of miracles. The community asks for nothing more than what they had already witnessed in the two Apostles—nothing more than what their great High Priest had in prayer asked for them on the night of His passion (see John xvii. 15). In the unshaken testimony, therefore, of the two Apostles before the angry Sanhedrim, when they boldly confessed to having performed the miracle in the name of Jesus, they, as we ourselves have also done, recognised a complete victory over all the powers of the world.

The shaking of the place of their assembly, which followed upon their prayer, is a sign that the will of God had power over the foundations of the earth. The might of this world, which opposed itself to God, depends solely on the continuance of the visible things which were put in its power; but the community with its witnesses on the will of God revealed to them. No sooner, therefore, does the community, abandoning all dependence on the visible world, lean in faith and prayer on the word and will of God, than there follows the shaking of the earth, as being the foundation and support of the visible world. It is consequently a sign both of the divine approval of the community as having acted rightly, and also of the divine promise that it should obtain the victory over the powers of the world. As a consequence of this sign all were filled with the Spirit, not imparting, as at Pentecost, the gift of tongues, but the power to preach the word of God with all boldness.

In this expression we are, without doubt, to understand an extension of the power both as to preaching and to teaching beyond the body of the Apostles. It was designed to reveal to them the fact that the prerogative of boldly preaching the Gospel was not confined to a small number within the community, but that

it was immanent in the whole community as such, and that as such they were supplied with an inexhaustible boldness to testify as would be fully equal to the struggle of maintaining it in conflict with all the powers of the world, which had now for the first time lifted its head in hostile threatenings against the community.

St Luke, however, is not contented with having merely shewn that this overcoming of the first show of hostility against the Church is only momentary. But as he had allowed us to catch a glimpse at the hidden source of the victorious power which dwells in the community, so he now again brings before us its external position, in order to shew us that the danger which so menacingly approached it from the side of the secular power, had not produced the slightest disturbance or alteration of its external appearance. With this object now St Luke places prominently forward the remarkable fact of the community of goods, as that in which, beyond all else, the characteristic peculiarity of the society is reflected. That what is here meant is the condition of the whole community, is proved by the entire context, as De Wette has justly remarked. Meyer, therefore, is wrong in his attempt to limit the Aorist *τῶν πιστευσάντων* in ver. 32, and to interpret it as referring only to those who had been recently added; for apart from the small stock of the original community up to the day of Pentecost, the belief of the whole body was but a novel event. But now, granting that the description applies to all the members, a difficulty has been found in the fact that, although nothing essentially new is here added, not the slightest reference is made to the earlier condition and the previous description of the body (ii. 44, 75). Some indeed have discerned in this fact a proof of the want of a pervading unity of composition in our work (see Schleiermacher Einleit. in d. N. T. 352, 353). But in such objections both the usual character of the Biblical narrative, and generally the inartificial style of oriental historical compositions is overlooked (see Ewald. Composition der Genesis. S. 144, 176). If, in the place of such repetitions, we expect to find something similar to our own compendious way of referring to the preceding passages, our expectation would not only be perfectly unjustifiable, but by so doing we should overlook altogether the peculiar force and beauty of such unstudied repetitions. For by means of such a repetition, as is here before us,

St Luke wishes to fix our attention once more on the facts—it is intended that we should dwell for a while in thought on this remarkable peculiarity. For it is by this means alone that our author is able properly to attain to the end he has in view. Since it is only when we realize to our minds this community of goods in all the force of its concrete reality that we are able clearly to discern that the assault from without has in no wise disturbed either the internal or the external relations of the society. For by the occurrence of this hostility it had lost especially all hope of external security. If, therefore, this community of property had not rested on the indestructible foundation of the Spirit, it must necessarily have sustained a violent shock from the turn which things had taken. But even the fact, that this characteristic feature is again exhibited to us and dwelt upon, is intended to furnish a new proof that it was founded on the spirit. The unstudied repetition of this statement is designed to show that the maintenance of this state of things, in spite of that state of insecurity produced by the threatening aspect of the world, is to be regarded as a new operation of the spirit. And besides, with a general resemblance between the present description and the former, there are nevertheless not wanting certain deviations, from which, however, we may affirm, that so far from having to consider it as a drawing back, we ought, on the contrary, to infer an advance. Just as the Apostles bear testimony to the resurrection of Jesus with greater zeal, and instead of allowing themselves to be intimidated by the threatenings of the Sanhedrim (ver. 33), acquired rather fresh vigour and alacrity ; so the community of believers which, during the course of these things, had increased to a small people, exhibits the very condition which had been promised to the people of Israel by the grace of God, that, viz., no poor man should be among them (Deut. xv. 4 ; comp. ver. 34), and therefore St Luke, with good reason, justly sees in this a sign of God's exceeding grace (see De Wette) upon all its members. If now at the conclusion of this description we have brought before us (vv. 36—37) a peculiar instance of this brotherly fellowship which the grace of God had brought about, and through which the miseries of poverty are removed, it is intended to realise and to bring before our minds the whole of a matter which lies far

out of the course of our daily experience and modes of thought. It is only natural that, with this object in view, an especially characteristic instance should be chosen. There was in the community a Levite, of the name of Joses, belonging by birth to the Island of Cyprus. When in ver. 34 we are told that all after their common prayer, and after being filled with the Holy Ghost, spoke the word of God with boldness, this may have been, as regards the greater number, merely a transitory effect; with Joses, however, it was comparatively of a more durable character, so that on this very account the Apostles gave him the name of Barnabas, son of inspired eloquence[1]. By virtue of this inner transformation was the faculty bestowed upon him of fulfilling the vocation which belonged to him by descent to minister, especially in the sanctuary of God. Conformably with this gift, he now seeks to make his external condition correspond to his spiritual calling—he possessed a portion of land—which was not allowable in a Levite to whom the Lord had said, he would be exclusively their portion (vid. Numb. xviii. 10; Deut. x. 3). He therefore sells his possession, and delivers the produce to the Apostles. Accordingly we are by this example, and by the general observation in ver. 34, reminded that, while the authorities in Israel had leagued themselves and banded together with the raging heathen against the anointed of Jehovah, the Church of Christ had, through God's miraculous protecting and fostering grace, exhibited a state of things corresponding to that original model of the people of Israel which the word of God has sketched.

SECT. IX. THE FIRST DANGER FROM WITHIN.

(Chap. v. 1—16.)

From the last section we might easily be led to imagine that the danger which the Church had henceforth to encounter from

[1] The most probable interpretation of this name is that given by Winer (bibl. Realwort. ij. 38) and by Hefele (Patres Apostolici Prolog. p. 61)—that namely Barnabas is tantamount to בַּר־נְבוּאָה; for not

the powers of the world, would form for her a perfectly sufficient trial of her strength and purity. But that it was not so is proved by the narrative which immediately follows. At the very time that Israel was passing through her first struggle with the Canaanites, and executing God's judgments on the abominations of the Amorites, exhibiting themselves as the holy people of Jehovah, (Josh. vii.), Achan, one out of the very midst of Israel, laid unholy hands on the property. In the same manner it happened with the first Church of Christ which, as we have just seen, was the realisation of the idea of the people Israel in contrast with a hostile and godless world. It is here shown that the very community, which in the general shape of its life and character, exhibits a striking opposition to that of the hostile world, is by no means a place in which there dwells nothing but holiness and love. In this society the sinner naturally must assume another form from what he would take in the world without. For whereas in the world the enmity against Jesus displayed itself openly, in the community nothing was allowed that would not bow before the name Jesus. But as in Paradise it was impossible for the evil will to shew itself, and to assert its sway, in its own proper form, and as it therefore chose a shape belonging to the class of creatures who were already present in the place of God, and thus was able to make itself felt, so also this very intrusion of evil into the sphere of humanity shows that evil can very well assume the appearance and work under the guise of goodness. Nay, that in such a guise, it exercises a specially seductive influence. Since then we can hence understand in general how sin was possible within the holy limits of the Christian brotherhood, we shall see that the instance here brought before us is in fact in conformity with this law. However, evil in the form of goodness is a contradiction which is only removed by the laws of time and development, which bring to light everything that belongs to the essential nature of things, so that the more the evil developes itself, the sooner will it become apparent in all its essential deformity. It is at this culminating point of its development that the first instance of evil in the community is brought before us. But precisely at this very point

only is Barnabas described in Acts. xiii. 1, as a Prophet προφήτης, but also according to 1 Cor. xiv. 3, προφητεία is essentially παράκλησις.

does the peculiarity of the present occasion manifest itself. As soon as evil becomes visible and cognisable as such in the midst of the community, the spirit of the latter, which is pure and holy, must react energetically against it, and thereby expel that contradiction between the appearance and the reality which had previously existed in its very midst. But just as an internal foe is more dangerous than an external one, so is this danger from within far greater than that which threatened from without. However, the community was sufficiently armed against this danger also, and this the narrative before us will abundantly prove.

We have already been informed how, in the society at Jerusalem, the spirit of brotherly communion smoothed all the harsh inequalities of property, and moved the rich to dispose of their superfluity for the relief of the needy. But now we we have brought before us a husband and a wife belonging to the wealthy class, discerning indeed something laudable and praiseworthy in this principle of the brethren who, with regard to wealth, were of the same condition as themselves, and yet while feeling this are conscious that they do not possess that spirit of love which disposed others to such self-denial. Instead, however, of taking shame to themselves for this conviction, and instead of seeking to be stimulated to greater love, they bring a small outward offering in the hope of gaining thereby the credit of being animated by the same charity as the rest. From this we see that they caredmore for the appearance than for the reality. But without a lie they could not attain to this their object; and in this case the lie must be carried out to a dreadful enormity. We have been told already that the money raised by the sale of these possessions, was laid at the very feet of the Apostles, and this of itself leads us to form the idea of a solemn act of delivery of this money. And this idea is still further borne out by the fact, that as we perceive the handing over of the money usually took place in the midst of the assembly; and since in ver. 7 an interval of three hours is mentioned, we are led to think of the ordinary meetings of the community at the appointed times of prayer. The money was therefore laid at the feet of the Apostles, at the feet of those men who, by the plenitude of the Holy Spirit which was in them, and spoke by them, and, also by the miraculous signs and wonders performed by their hands, were daily manifested to be the sacred

instruments of the heaven exalted king, Jesus Christ. Furthermore, these offerings were required to be made at the time when the community, which walked together in brotherly love and heavenly purity, were assembled for Divine worship and thanksgiving around the holy band of the Apostles. Before the face therefore of the Apostles, and in the midst of that solemn assembly engaged in prayer, must this lie have been uttered; for otherwise the object of this wife and husband could not have been gained. This in fact is the crime which these two persons had first of all resolved upon and bound themselves to perform, and what afterwards each for his part actually carried out. It is altogether inconceivable then that these two persons could have condescended to such a wicked lie, unless the whole of their former life and character had been a gradual approach to such a state of depravity. From the action here imputed to them, we may unhesitatingly arrive at the conclusion that the previous state of their minds was altogether devoid both of love and truth (see Ephes. iv. 25); and it equally follows from this, their last act and deed, that they had managed hitherto to conceal this want of truth and love under an appearance of sanctity. It is therefore nothing less than hypocrisy, that leaven of the Pharisees (Luke xii. 1), which here comes across us in the community. Had this impurity found free course and play it would have corrupted the holiness of the whole body (1 Cor. v. 6). But at the very moment when the vice of hypocrisy seeks to carry out its object, and becomes manifest, it is seized and ejected.

Here also Peter is the spokesman, since it is both a novel matter, and one which is to furnish a law and rule for all such occasions in future. We are not told how Peter became acquainted with their deceit—whether by natural or supernatural means. The important point which we have to consider is, that hypocrisy has ventured upon a stage where it is discovered, and assuredly may always be detected unless the necessary purity and sagacity should be wanting to the mind of the whole society. The ancient commentators regard the death which followed the words of Peter as a sentence intended by him, and even Meyer has again advanced this view. But this interpretation does not agree altogether with the narrative. All that St Peter does is to pronounce a judgment on the act committed by the married

couple. In his words there is not contained any expression of His own will. But assuredly this would have been the case if he had had a predetermined purpose. If he says to Sapphira ἐξοίσουσί σε (v. 9), words upon which Meyer chiefly rests his view, this proves nothing more than that he foresaw that his words would be followed with the same result in the case of the wife as had already attended them in that of the husband—an expectation which is not to be wondered at, since he had discovered that they were both equally guilty. Consequently here also we can discern no trace of any intention on St Peter's part. The characteristic feature of the judgment consists simply in this, that he had without reserve designated by its proper name the crime that had been brought to light. The nature of this crime he twice declares to be a lie (vv. 3, 4). It is not, however, an ordinary lie; not a lie unto man, says St Peter, but unto God—a lie unto the Holy Ghost. How does Peter arrive at such a conclusion? Because forsooth he regards the community as the abode or the temple of the Holy Ghost (comp. Rom. vi. 6; 1 Cor. vi. 16). At this time, and in the present conjuncture, he may do so with the more justice and the more force, the more freshly every thing in the community bears on it the lively traces of the operation of the Holy Ghost, and the more so as nothing had as yet transpired which was in direct opposition to this influence of the Spirit. And on the same reason, perceptible not by faith alone, but also by the senses, does it rest that Peter recognized and asserted the presence of God in the community (comp. Ephes. viii. 22; 1 Tim. iii. 15). So base and wicked a lie Peter ascribes at once to Satan, and with this assertion he opens the sentence of condemnation which he pronounces upon Ananias. In every case where sin manifests itself in any extraordinary degree of enmity against God, it is referred by Scripture to the author of evil (comp. Joh. xiii. 27). In the present case, besides the enormity of the lie, which even of itself leads us to look for its source in the Father of lies (Joh. viii. 44), there is the additional circumstance, that this iniquity is the first instance of evil detected within this sainted circle. Just as in Paradise, it was from none but the evil one himself that sin could have come upon Adam and his wife, so in the present case it must have been precisely the same tempter who instigated

Ananias and his wife, so that at the very time that they pretend to be full of the Holy Ghost, they are discovered to be in fact full of the spirit of evil (ver. 3).

It is precisely the same judgment as that which the Apostles pronounce on Judas Iscariot. Even when he lived and moved in the society of the Lord and the disciples, he was already a thief; but he contrived to conceal his love of dishonest gains under the hypocritical mask of care for the poor (Joh. iv. 4, 5). As he persevered in this contradiction between his real character and his assumed one, even in the midst of the holiest community that ever existed upon earth, he must consequently have been from the very first under the influence of Satan. Jesus, who saw at a glance the most secret thoughts of the heart, knew him from the beginning to be such (Joh. vi. 70 71); but so long as his deceit was still concealed from the eyes of men, he remained amidst the holy influences of the fellowship of Jesus and the rest of the Apostles. As soon, however, as his hidden wickedness came to light, there was an end of such communion, and the evangelists delivered precisely the same judgment on the final outbreak of the evil as Peter does on the last act of Ananias and Sapphira. They refer, that is to say, this last act of depravity expressly to Satan, who had filled him full (see Luke xxii. 3; Joh. xiii. 27). While Peter, in the presence of the society, thus speaks without reserve of the crime which had been just committed, he is nothing else than the spokesman of the whole community; for his discourse is a declaration of the inconsistency between the holy brotherhood and the unholy act of these two liars. This speech has indeed had a deadly effect both on Ananias and Sapphira. It would be unwarrantable to deny the miraculous nature of this fact. But, on the other hand, we are justified in allowing with Neander for the natural susceptibility of both these individuals in the result that actually took place. We may suppose, from what we learn of Ananias and Sapphira, that they laid great stress upon the good opinion of both the Apostles and the community at large; for what other motive could have induced them not only to tell so fearful an untruth, but also to part with a portion even of their possessions, but the desire to obtain as good a name as others who had even stripped themselves of all property? If, therefore, at the very moment when they

expected to receive the praises and thanks of the community, they heard from the mouth of the first of the Apostles, and in the presence of the holy community, a condemnation pronounced upon them, which reaches to the inmost core of their secret wickedness, would not the sentence necessarily have fallen upon them like a thunderbolt? Nevertheless it is far from our intention or wish to deny that an extraordinary and miraculous operation of God was associated with this ordinary effect of St Peter's discourse; or that it was under such a conviction that Peter spoke beforehand of the death of Sapphira. It is by reason of this extraordinary element that the event shapes itself into a sign for all future ages of the Church. Even as in the first period of their history the holy and chosen people of Jehovah could not but remove the first transgressor Achan from the midst of their society, so also in its early spring-tide must the first community of Christ's people separate from its bosom the first lie. But while Joshua and Israel had recourse to stoning, Peter and his associates employed no other means than the word with which they described the sin by its right name. The wonderful effects which in this case followed the judicial sentence, was intended to make it clear to all succeeding ages, that it is associated with full and sufficient power, and therefore can work a real and purifying cleansing; and the necessity of such a sign is the more evident, as even to the present day there are many who, for the exclusion of evil, would gladly see the Church avail herself of a very different power than the mere judicial opinion of the community itself.

The general account which, in the following verses (vv. 11—16), is given us of the Apostles and the Church, stands in precisely the same relation to the preceding narrative as the section 4. 32—37 does to the account which it follows of the outbreak of the first hostility. In both cases the object is to point out to us that the overcoming of any obstacle in the community is not merely the negation of a negative, but that it produces a real step in advance, in order to prove that we have here the locus in which is centred the power which conquers all things and ever operates with success. The immediate effect of that fearful influence of the Apostle's words is fear. This fear does not fall only upon all who hear them, but also on the entire community. The holiness of the community was that which essentially was revealed in the

retribution upon Ananias and Sapphira. The community had in this case shewn itself as it were the sacred fire of the altar, which broke forth and consumed everything impure (Levit. x. 1—10). The community as a whole had scarcely been aware of that extent of its own holiness, which was shewn in this event. On this account they themselves cannot but feel fear; not to mention the terror which must have seized those who stood without and heard of such holy rigor. However, this fear might also have had a prejudical effect; it might have dimmed the brightness of the heavenly grace in which the community were desgined to shine. Neither a judicial nor an executive power constitutes the essential characteristic of the community; but, on the contrary, it is properly the place of safety, the city of refuge from the miseries of the last days—the holy Mount Zion, on which alone is to be found shelter and protection from the storms and the tempests amidst which the world is to be dissolved. It is for this cause that the impression of fear is immediately removed by the fact that many miracles and wonders of healing are wrought by the hands of the Apostles among the people, so that the Apostles are regarded by them with a holy awe; and whenever they were assembled together in any public place, such as the porch of Solomon, no one who did not belong to the Christian body dared from a feeling of reverential awe to intrude himself among them. But this general impression was not all—whole multitudes both of men and women were added to them (ver. 14). And of all this the result is (ὥστε ver. 15) an augmentation of miraculous power to a degree hitherto unknown—both in the extent of its exercise, and in its potency and virtue. Not only were the sick in Jerusalem healed, who were carried forth in such numbers that they were placed in the streets on beds and couches, but also from the cities round about many diseased and afflicted persons were brought into Jerusalem and were healed. But what must appear still more remarkable, is the circumstance, that the shadow of Peter as he passed by is described as working miracles. True it is that nothing more is stated than that the sick were brought out in order that the shadow of Peter might fall upon them as he passed by. We are not told that any miraculous effect proceeded from this overshadowing; still no weight can justly be laid on this; for, had no result followed from

it, why are we told it in the midst of a passage which evidently is intended to convey a notion of the infinite miraculous operations of the Apostle? The shadow of Peter, therefore, actually did heal the sick. Here then, Zeller asserts (see Theol. Jahrb. 1849, 52—53) evident magic, a myth, or a falsehood. To all, however, who consider the general connection between verses 15 and 16, and the beginning of the present chapter, and the still closer connection between them and ver. 14, the matter will assume a far more favourable aspect than this criticism implies.

The history of Ananias and Sapphira had, by St Peter's means especially, set forth in so prominent a light the purely spiritual and ethical character of the community, that every theory concerning it, however purely it may be carried out, must come far short of the actual narrative of the facts. Such a narrator might surely reckon upon some degree of credence if he goes on directly to narrate certain operations of the same Peter in the same sphere of spiritual life, which bear upon their front the appearance of being brought about by a purely external medium. He might justly make the demand on the attentive reader that he should imagine under this apparent use of external means an internal principle correspondent to the effects produced. If, therefore, we take it for granted that the sick were healed by the shadow of St Peter, then in a context such as that before us we are bound to suppose that this same Peter who, but just now, in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, had so fearfully avenged the false semblance of joining the Church of Christ, must have had good reasons for believing that there existed in these sick folk a true faith in the power of God which dwelt in him. Or is there any one that will maintain, that a truly living and moral faith can never assume such a form—not even in the case of St Peter, being as he was in such requisition that many could never come into any other contact with him than that of a momentary overshadowing, in which the man of God kept the stroke of the sun (see Ps. cxxi. 6) from the sufferers? He, who asserts that, sets arbitrary limits to faith which the Lord of faith himself has expressly removed (Matt. xvii. 20; Mark ix. 23; John xv. 7). Still further, to establish the hypothesis that there existed in those who sought to be healed a firm faith in the might of God dwelling in the Apostle Peter,

the narrative of the miraculous effects of the overshadowing is brought into immediate connexion with the conversion of whole troops of men and women to the faith of the Lord. This combination implies that we are to consider this desire for the miraculous overshadowing by Peter, either as an immediate or else as a mediate effect of these conversions—and consequently as an act of faith.

Throughout, therefore, the whole of these extraordinary and countless miracles—and this is the design of the closing portion of our present narrative—the Church of Christ is set forth as the holy seat of God's saving power, both for Jerusalem and the whole country around, and thus that which Peter had from the very first announced receives a new and most glorious confirmation.

SECT. X. THE FIRST SUFFERING OF THE APOSTLES.

(Chap. v. 17—42).

The Church, in her struggles both within and without, has hitherto sustained her character most nobly, and he who has eyes to see must confess that by her existence she unceasingly confirms what Peter declared of her in his discourse on the day of Pentecost. Will this maintenance of her character have any effect on the Sanhedrim and tend to gain for her a more favourable decision? Judging from the position taken up and the decision come to by the latter we can scarcely hope it. The section which we are now to consider will even shew us the direct contrary. "The high priest," it runs, "and they who were with him of the sect of the Sadducees, laid hands upon the Apostles (ver. 17). These words are generally understood as implying that the Sadducees were indeed in league with the High Priest, but that he himself did not belong to that sect, since Caiaphas, whom, as it appears from other sources of information, we must here understand by the high priest, is not known to have been really a Sadducee. Zeller, however (ubi s. S. 69), will not allow of this interpretation, since, he argues, the words *πάντες οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ* point to a permanent connection, from which would arise the

necessity of considering the high priest to have been himself a Sadducee, and this would then justify the inference of a want of historical accuracy in the statement. And in truth, if the association of the high priest with the Sadducees had been thus spoken of for the first time in this passage, Zeller would be justified in holding his opinion. As, however, in iv. 1, 2, the combination of the priests with the Sadducees, in the attitude they assume towards the Aposltes, is not only mentioned, but also an adequate motive ascribed for it, we cannot admit the validity of Zeller's objection, and we therefore understand the combination in the present passage in the same sense as before. If, even at an earlier period, the priests, taking a carnal view of their office, had evinced a jealousy of the teaching of the Apostles, the high priest had a still greater reason for doing so, now that the Sanhedrim had solemnly enjoined them to preach no more in the name of Jesus. As regards the Sadducees, naturally enough their hostility to the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus had not abated in any degree. Accordingly the league of the high priest with the Sadducees, which is here mentioned, is nothing but the natural continuation of the union spoken of in iv. 1, 2. The circumstance, however, that the Sadducees are invariably placed at the head of the opposition to the Apostles is, according to Baur (see Paulus. p. 34) and Zeller (ubi S. P. 69. 70), an utter contradiction to the truth of history. But, in fact, if there had been less of prejudice on the part of these critics against the historical character of the work we are examining, this very circumstance must have appeared no little favourable to the credibility of our narrative. For assuredly if, at a later period, a writer had set to work to think out and to adjust a history of the Church, he would hardly have fallen upon the strange idea of ascribing to the sect of the Sadducees a leading part in the opposition to the Church, for, as the antagonism between Christianity and Judaism grew more marked and decided, it so happened that it was the legal principle which more and more obstinately opposed itself to the Gospel. If even the Judaizing Hegesppius gives the name of Pharisees to those who rose up against James, who had always walked in the strictest ordinances of Judaism (see Euseb. H. E. 2. 23), we may infer from this fact how very remote from the post-Apostolic times must have been any idea of a vigorous

opposition on the part of the Sadducees. However, says Zeller, (see ubi. s. S. 68), "the thing itself is improbable." Since, forsooth, the Pharisees had evidently been the foremost adversaries of Jesus, they, from their antecedents, were naturally the most consistent persecutors of the Apostles. However, we ought not to lose sight of the fact that the removal of Jesus effected a very considerable change in this respect. He who, by the humility of His appearance, in despite of which, however, He set up to be the Messiah, had been, in His avowed opposition to their pride and hypocrisy, the great stumbling block to the zealots of the law, was now taken away. His disciples, it is true, still believed in His claims to be the Messiah, but as they walked according to the ordinances of the law, hoped for a general conversion of Israel, and held out a prospect of the general restoration of the fallen fortunes of the people, the existence of their community became, up to this moment, by far less offensive to the legal conscience than the presence of Jesus himself had proved.

With the Sadducees it was quite otherwise; for their avowed disbelief of a life after death was, according to the Apostolic preaching of the resurrection of Jesus, to be punished as a lie. Thus, then, we find in this very opposition of the Sadducees, the characteristic sign of the times of recent conflict of the Church with Judaism.

And on this occasion, too, the opposition assumes exactly the same course as on the former. But in more that one respect is the issue different. The Apostles were cast into prison, to be as before brought the next day before the Council to answer for what they had done. But whereas in the previous instance the affair ran very simply, here an appearance of angels intervenes, which delivered the Apostles from the prison, and enjoined them to proceed boldly in their public preaching of the words of the new life (vv. 19—20). With regard to this account Meyer and Neander have recourse to the assumption of legendary amplification, and thereby not only make it easy work for the opponents of the History of the Acts, but also abandon, by their indifference, an important element in the development of our history. For that, which the impugners of this history of the Apostles most take exception against, is the very thing that furnishes the key to the right understanding of it. What, say

they, can be the meaning of this deliverance of the Apostles by an angel, if, nevertheless, they are again to be given over to the power of the Sanhedrim ;—in such a case the miraculous agency is quite uselessly lavished, and therefore its truth cannot be maintained even by an apologist ready to believe all wonders? But even though, as is certainly quite evident, the miracle may not in this case have been designed to take any influential part in the historical development, still it may very well have been a sign and designed as such to accomplish an important and necessary end.

As the hostility of the Jewish authorities had now been kindled, it was likely that they would not be content to stop at mere menace, but would proceed to an actual attack upon the Apostles. The Apostles were on this occasion given over into the power of the hostile Sanhedrim. When the imperial power of Sennacherib lifted its hand against the holy city and the people of Jerusalem, he was not permitted to shoot an arrow there, but was forced to retire in all haste from the sacred city, because Hezekiah had prayed unto the Lord; and when, at a later date, Nebuchednezzar had established his power as absolute monarch of all nations, kindreds, and tongues, his rage was not permitted to do any harm to the three youthful Israelites who feared Jehovah more than the lord of all the world; and in like manner was Daniel, the servant of the Lord, delivered from the power of the lions. Thus had Jehovah, at certain decisive moments, displayed his sovereignty over the greatest potentates of this world by showing that he could protect his faithful servants in their greatest extremity from all suffering and wrong. But now, if the witnesses of Jesus suffer harm—and that too on the very first occasion—at the command of the high priests and elders of Israel, would there not be a proof therein that Jesus is not Jehovah, and His Church not the true Israel ? This erroneous inference could only be guarded against by a fact—only by a sign from God. And this, precisely, is the signification of the miraculous deliverance of the Apostles from prison by the means of an angel. Just as Jesus at His betrayal by the mere pronouncing of His own name, struck his enemies to the ground before they could lay a hand on Him, and thereby gave an actual demonstration of the truth of His words that He gave himself up of His own free will ; so in the present case, by the sending of His angel, he

first of all makes the high council feel in its doubt and perplexity, (ver. 24), that of itself it has no power over His witnesses, but that it is given to them from above. Zeller expresses his great astonishment that during the subsequent proceedings neither the Apostles nor their judges make any reference to the fact of their miraculous release (see ibid. p. 63. 64). But the judges would not have felt much disposition to refer even once to the cause of their utter perplexity (see ver. 24); and to the Apostles, who availed themselves of the occasion to make once more, in the presence of the Sanhedrim, a confession of their faith, the fact may not have appeared important at that time. What really would be a thing to wonder at was, that the judges, notwithstanding the miracle, should have gone on unchecked with their persecution, did not both Scripture and experience show that the possession of authority in this world, in every case where a liveliness of conscience is not present, is invariably associated with a blindness perfectly extraordinary?

Now, by the very fact that the high priests receive the last explanation of the Apostles with threats and menaces, and describe the whole behaviour of the Apostles from the very first as an act of disobedience to the Sanhedrim (ver. 28), they plainly intimate that they do not intend to enter upon the real matter before them, but regard it as already decided and condemned. Standing, therefore, on this perfectly formal point of inquiry, they show that they have only become hardened in their previous animosity to the Gospel. It is thus that the Apostles understand the matter, and they take their position accordingly. Instead of expressing, as they had on the former occasion, their respectful acknowledgment of their authority, they at once begin with that to which they found themselves constrained at the close even of the first examination (see iv. 19). Only as they perceive that the council has taken a step further in their declaration of hostilities, they also in like manner express their own resolution in language proportionately more determined. They forthwith declare that in those who presume to pass judgment on them they can see nothing more than mere men, in so far as they declare themselves opposed to the preaching in the name of Jesus, and that against the authority of men they must set the command of God, and that consequently they have not a moment's hesitation as to whom they

ought to obey (ver. 29). Moreover, Peter does not omit expressly to testify that Jesus is the Saviour principally for Israel, for the purpose of giving repentance to the people and forgiveness of sins. This implies that St Peter still cherishes a special hope for Israel; only that he entertains all the while as vivid a consciousness of the condition on which alone that hope could be accomplished.

This carriage of Peter and the other Apostles which proclaimed not only their firm adherence in the hated course of action but also their open disregard of the authority of the Sanhedrim, caused no slight rage and indignation to the assembly, so that they began to take counsel to slay them (ver. 83). Even after all the passionateness and malice which we have already witnessed in the members of the Sanhedrim, this plunge into the very abyss appears almost too precipitate. It is therefore nothing to be wondered at if among them a mediating voice makes itself heard and moderates the storm. It is the voice of Gamaliel the Pharisee. From the very first a difficulty has been felt concerning this speech of Gamaliel which is reported to us at length. In the first centuries it was believed that in this exhortation to moderate measures, we ought to recognize on the part of the Pharisee a favourable disposition towards Christianity; but Neander observes very justly that there is no room for such a supposition, both from the position which Gamaliel assumes in the council, and also because of the relation in which he stood to Paul of Tarsus. It must then be (it is inferred) that our whole account is not historical, but (as they term it) apologetic or conciliatory. It is to this view that modern criticism is decidedly inclined. Independently of all details, such a speech, in such a combination, is found by them to be perfectly inconceivable. Baur argues: "if all these marvels had really so happened as they are here narrated, and moreover in so authoritative a manner that even the Sanhedrim itself cannot call them in question, how could Gamaliel, such as he is here described to us, an impartial, prudent, man, and resting his judgment on experience, have expressed himself so questionably as he here does, proposing to wait for the future issue to decide whether God had or not anything to do with the matter?" (See Paulus. der. Apostel. S. 35). But we have already seen on the occasion of the first public arraign

ment of the Apostles, that according to the laws established in Israel, signs and wonders alone and by themselves were not sufficient in a matter of this kind, and that from beginning to end the Sanhedrim in all its measures proceeded on the basis of this view. Luckily the idea occurred even to Baur (S. 36), that the miracles might have been regarded as dæmoniacal; though indeed he immediately rejects the possibility of such a supposition, by observing that in such a case the very severest of punishments must have been inflicted. Certainly, as soon, that is, as it was clearly made out that the name of Jesus did not possess the dignity of the name of Jehovah; but it is precisely herein that the difference lies between the calm Gamaliel and the excited members of the Sanhedrim; that whereas the latter asserted that the charge was clearly established, and that the Apostles, as false prophets, were guilty of death; the former maintained that it was right to wait the farther issue of affairs, before passing a favourable or unfavourable sentence upon them. But Baur confesses that he does not see what there could be further to wait for. If it was not miracles, then it must be the acceptance or approbation which the teaching of the Apostles was or not to meet with. But even in this respect the most brilliant results already lay before them, "every preaching of the Apostles had for its effect the conversion of thousands, the whole people hung with astonishment and awe on the lips of the preachers of the new faith, so that not even its rulers and chiefs dared to use violence towards them." The Rabbi Gamaliel would assuredly have no difficulty to answer such an argument; he would perhaps have said, "The approbation of the multitude stands for nought in my estimation; for it is written in the law: 'Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil' (Exod. xxiii. 2); but if Jesus, whom these men preach, is really the Messiah, then His truth must be shewn and established by Israel being delivered from its foreign masters, the children of the captivity being brought home again, and the kingdom of David being again set up, and, lastly, by the whole people receiving a new heart to walk in all the ordinances of Jehovah."

We see, then, that neither does Gamaliel speak more favourably than we should expect from a Pharisee, nor does his speech imply less than what is actually reported to us of the consequences of the preaching of the Apostles. But now, if in the speech of

Gamaliel there is nothing that in itself is improbable, still this fact of the staying of the persecution by a Pharisee is a very remarkable one. In the first place, it is a proof of the credibility of our informant; and in the second place it is a characteristic token of the course in which the development of the Church had to run. The effect of the speech of Gamaliel is, that the plan of putting the Apostles to death is abandoned. Who would have ascribed such a result to the teacher of Saul, who, as a Pharisee, persecuted the Christians even unto blood—who would have imputed this to him to whom is ascribed the composition of the Synagogue's form of imprecation on the Christians? (See Othonis Lexicon rabbinic. p. 224). This, at least, is, I think, quite obvious, that if we really found ourselves here in a domain in which personal preconception had allowed itself to deal at pleasure with facts, an influence of such a kind would not possibly have been ascribed to Gamaliel. The report of such a fact is only conceivable in the case of a truly objective narrative, which brings before our notice even such stages of the development, as in its subsequent course are pushed into the back-ground, and scarcely seem to be any longer conceivable. But is not that stage of the development of the church to which we are carried by this speech of Gamaliel, which proved the protection of the Christians, the very identical one which has met us through all our previous exposition, with this slight exception, that it here shews itself to us under a new aspect. For in truth, the contrast between the preaching of the Gospel and the Law, and external Judaism in general, could not be brought to its full and perfect manifestation, so long as the Christian community still adhered closely to the worship of the Temple and the Synagogue, and as long as the Church still cherished the hope—such as Peter had even lately given utterance to, v. 31—of the conversion, immediately to follow, of the whole people. Such being the inward temper and the outward bearing of the Church in those days, it was quite possible for even the strictest Pharisee to consider it advisable to observe a certain circumspection and moderation both in judgment and conduct towards those Jews who believed in Jesus.

But now as we could not avoid noticing the nature, critically considered, of the report which is given us of the speech of Gamaliel, so it is impossible to leave altogether unnoticed a difficulty on

which the negative criticism of our days lays especial weight. It is the mention of the rioter Theudas, in the speech of Gamaliel. It is indeed well known that Josephus makes a perfectly similar mention of one Theudas, who, however, belongs to a far later time than this speech of Gamaliel can be assigned to. It is only natural that after a prolepsis against the truth of history has in the present case been admitted on many sides, modern criticism availing itself of this admission, should fancy it can overthrow the truth of the whole narrative (see Zeller in the Theolog. Jahrb. 1849. S. 65, &c., 1851. S. 270, &c.). However, after our informant has so often, and especially in this portion of his narrative, so splendidly maintained his credibility, the latter inference must appear a forced conclusion of criticism; moreover, the very admission on which it rests must be regarded as an unmerited act of treachery against the writer of the history, so long as the possibility of a different hypothesis still remains open. Now such a different hypothesis is the assumption adopted both by many ancient and modern commentators and historians—that there were two rioters of this name. This hypothesis has a twofold support: on the one hand, the frequent occurrence of this name among the Jews (see Lightfoot on the passage); and, on the other, the frequent mutinies of these restless times of disorder. It may indeed certainly be the case, that the hypothesis built on this assumption by Sonntag, Wieseler, and Zuschlag, may not be found tenable when exposed to a rigid criticism; but still that circumstance does not by any means annihilate the reasonableness of the hypothesis itself.

If then the Sanhedrim, even though it allowed itself to be influenced by the advice of Gamaliel, nevertheless condemned the Apostles to be scourged, this must be looked upon as the penalty of their disobedience, as indeed follows clearly from their repetition of their former prohibition; whereas the previous inquiry of the Sanhedrim had had in view the punishment of their late proceedings, which, as they pretended, were such as only false prophets could be guilty of. However, even in this circumstance that the Apostles must suffer and be exposed to bodily violence, we have a new thing exhibited to us. The Lord himself had not long before given a clear intimation that it was an easy matter for Him to release His witnesses out of the hands of the Jewish authorities; but if now He gives His own over to

violence, it must still be manifest that it is not the superior power of the world which reveals itself therein, but that such is even the will and the counsel of the Lord. But wherefore does He so will and so purpose? Wherefore has He up to this time cherished His servants as the apple of His eye (see Psalm cv. 14, 15), and now leaves His own to suffer and to be made a gazing-stock of the whole world? (See 1 Cor. iv. 3). The answer to this question is afforded by the Apostles themselves in their very deportment, as "they departed from the presence of the council," with their wounds, "and rejoiced that they were counted worthy of the honour of suffering shame for His name" (see v. 41). Not only therefore are they far from allowing themselves to be in the least deterred from continuing to preach daily in the name of Jesus both to the whole people and to individuals; but even to suffer for His name's sake is to them an honour and a ground of rejoicing. In this way all the designed effect of the punishment is not only averted, but even transmuted into its very opposite. Now at length we understand the doings and the operations of the Lord, who has retired into the Heavens to leave the evil in the world to work itself quite out, and to oppose to it nothing but the empire of the Spirit. It is on this account that He withdraws His protecting arm from His servants, and gives to them His Spirit instead, in order that the powers of the world may be first inwardly conquered before they should be outwardly annihilated for ever. Moreover, if that in whose honour the Apostles endured suffering is described as The Name, it is evidently implied therein, as Peter maintained in his first discourse, that the name of Jesus has taken the place of the sacred name in the Old Testament (see Levit. xxiv. 11, 16; Buxtorf Lexic. Talm. p. 2432), a fact which had proved the chief cause of offence to the Jewish authorities. And in truth this influence of the holy name which could transmute shame and suffering, endured for its sake, into honour and rejoicing, greatly transcends all that the name of Jehovah had ever accomplished. Here, therefore, we have actual demonstration that the name of Jesus is *the* name.

§ XI. THE FIRST DISSENSION WITHIN THE CHURCH.

(Chap. vi. 1—7.)

Precisely in the same way as after the overcoming of the first danger that threatened the Church from without, it was shown to us that she had not only to guard against external foes but also to an equal extent against internal enemies, so now also after that we have seen how the sufferings which came upon the Church from without are overcome by patience, we are conducted within the body in order to see how on the internal domain also a new danger for the Church springs up. For when in these days the community had received great accessions evidently through the preaching which was now attested by suffering, two parties were forming within it. On the one side stood the Jews, who being natives of Palestine, and speaking in the Aramaic, or what was then called the Hebrew tongue, were usually designated as Hebrews, and on the other were all such as had been born in the Jewish provinces of the Roman Empire, and who, as making use of the Greek tongue, were called Hellenists. Although the latter had an original stock in the number of those who, on the feast of Pentecost, were aroused to a notice of the Church by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the community, still it lay in the very nature of things that the community should receive its increase chiefly from among the Hebrews, as indeed the Pentecostal assembly itself—consequently the predominant element of the community at Jerusalem was composed of Galileans, and therefore of Hebrews. Now, this predominance sensibly manifested itself in this circumstance, that of the widows (a class which was looked upon as most especially needing assistance) those belonging to the Hellenists, did not, in the distribution of alms from the common stock, meet with a proportionate consideration with the widows of the Hebrews. Now, this inequality of relief gave rise to a loudly expressed discontent on the part of the Hellenists towards the Hebrews (see ver. 1). When we attentively consider the course of development which the Church followed in its first period, we see that

this apparently trivial incident involves an important element. We have, for instance, seen, that in the first days of the outpouring of the Spirit, the feeling of brotherly love was so strong that the natural distinctions and limitations with regard to property had totally vanished not only from the minds of men, but also from the actual use of it. And even at the time we are considering, the institute of a daily provision for the wants of the widows rested on this same feeling of communion. Now, however, another element makes itself felt alongside thereof. It is true it is not a personal selfishness that here betrays itself; but it is that of a society which, on the one hand, attracts together those who were allied by a common origin and a common language, and on the other hand opposes them to all others. It becomes, therefore, manifest that even though originally in the fulness of the Spirit all selfish exclusiveness of property appears to have been fully and generally overcome within the Church, yet as the original vigour of the Spirit was not retained everywhere, this weakness of human nature in the course of time again shows itself, though not at first in its grossest form. Not only therefore is the malice of Satan, with its serpent-like windings, able to insinuate itself into the household of the Lord, and to seduce individuals; but also the universal weakness and selfishness of humanity still continues to cling even to the man sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and introduces into the very midst of the seat of marvellous unity and of blessed peace the disturbing tumult of the world divided against itself. And what a prospect is here opened for the future! Hitherto the Church has embraced but a little space: she is as yet confined to Jerusalem, as yet she has admitted into her bosom none but the members of a single nation, and all as yet proceeds under the eyes of the Holy Apostles, and of so many besides who had themselves beheld the Lord of Life himself; and lastly the great fact of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit still lives in the vivid recollection of all! But as soon as the Church shall have spread throughout the countries and islands even unto the ends of the world, and have adopted into her family all the different varieties of nations, languages, and complexions; and when the first witnesses shall have long gone to their rest, and the marvels of the Spirit shall be but matter of olden history, what may we then expect to grow out of this

universal weakness of humanity? It is therefore easily conceivable why Luke dwells upon this incident, and accurately describes to us the way in which the baleful voice of this dissension was again lulled to silence.

Here for the first time it is shown that the Apostolical office is by no means an adequate organisation for the whole Church. For it was into the Apostles' hands that all the offerings of brotherly love which hitherto had been made were committed (see iv. 37; v. 2). They accordingly had to provide for the just and appropriate distribution of them. Now, so long as selfishness was kept down on all sides by the might of the original inspiration of the Spirit, all things proceeded smoothly and orderly. But no sooner had the weaknesses of human nature begun again to prevail within the Christian community, but the business of rightly dividing the common alms among the needy became extremely difficult and burdensome. Now, as the Apostles, by their original vocation, were called to labour chiefly for the publication of the Gospel, it is probable that they now committed the business of the distribution to other hands, and in this way an occasion for discontent would very easily be furnished. The Apostles hereupon call together the whole multitude of the disciples, and publicly declare that the previous regulation, by which all official employment and occupation was vested in the hands of the Apostles, was defective; and they therefore propose another arrangement, according to which the duty of distributing the alms is to be assigned to others. In the first place, the fact, that the Apostles see in the establishment of a better plan and order a real and essential progress for the Church, is of great importance. It may indeed be very specious to say that in spiritual things nothing essential can be done by means of a regulation and ordinance, because in this domain everything must ultimately depend on the Spirit, and in whatever measure the same is present, He will make His influence to be felt independently of all laws and ordinances; but that wherever the Spirit is absent, it is not possible for any regulations or ceremonies to bring Him back or to compensate for His absence. Naturally it was easy for any one in the case before us to say, with much unction: Selfishness has now at length forced its way into the sanctuary of the Christian brotherhood; it is an evil spirit which can only be cast

out by the Spirit of God; whoever has the Spirit of God let him fight against it when and how he can; and let no one expect any amelioration from outward ordinances and forms.—However the spirit which speaks in the Apostles is a stranger to such spiritualism. He censures a defective regulation, even though such censure may derogate from the official authority of the Apostles; and He brings forward a better one, although this is to be built up out of the community itself, notwithstanding that it was there that the dissension had broken out. Accordingly, the Apostles, first of all, lay their proposition before the Assembly, evidently with the view of gaining for it their approbation. For in the imperative ἐπισκέψασθε (ver. 3), it is not the command that is the principal point, as Löhe intimates (see his Aphorismen S. 86) but the imparted authority. And those who were addressed by the title of "Brethren" viewed the matter precisely in this light; for St Luke tell us that the saying of the Apostles met with the approval of the whole multitude. And when the assent of the community to the proposition was in this way gained, they were left to themselves to choose out of their own number seven men possessing certain specified qualifications. The seven men, who in this selection were put forward by the community, are then enumerated by name, in order to intimate the great importance of this ordinance. And the seven men thus elected are thereupon presented to the Apostles, who with prayer and imposition of hands institute them into their office of distributors of alms (ver. 6). Unquestionably, therefore, the Apostles stand before us in the last resort, as those who by the imposition of their hands impart to the elected a portion of their spirit of office (see Numb. xxvii 18), and by this solemn act complete the collation of the diaconate on the seven. But the most important point in this appointment is however the definitive nomination of the seven, which, according to the declaration of the Apostles, was antecedently certain of receiving their approbation, though indeed this ratification as being obviously implied is not mentioned. This nomination, however, is, by the Apostles, given over to the community. It is undeniable that it would have been a very natural course for the Apostles, as those who were furnished extraordinarily with the gift of discerning the Spirits to feel confident that they themselves could best perform

this nomination. How easily might such an exercise of Apostolic prerogative have been decked out with the most specious arguments? With what a fair shew of reason might it have been maintained that at that very time when the first symptom of selfishness had manifested itself, both on a large and general scale, it was impossible to trust the whole community as a body with the task of selecting the men who were best fitted to oppose and put down this vice! How speciously might it have been held that such an appeal to the community would be nothing else than to leave the sick man to choose his own medicines! How, it might further be asked—how could the Apostles whom the Lord himself had made answerable for the guidance and direction of His Church, and whom, for the purposes of their holy vocation, He had endowed with official grace, venture in so critical a moment to bestow upon it not even the slightest portion of their influence? Is it not cowardly to abandon, for the sake of quiet and ease, those rights and duties which God had entrusted to them, in order to gain the goodwill of the multitude? But we see the Apostles did not allow themselves to be influenced by any such thoughts. What, however, by this proceeding of the Apostles, seemed to be taken both from the glory of the Apostleship and from official dignity in general—which hitherto had been borne and discharged by the Apostles alone, is fully compensated by the rich and unmeasurable gain which accrues to the community and to the Church. The same result as we met with in the first outbreak of evil in the Church—the condemnation, namely, and rejection of the evil by the sentence of the whole body, we have now confirmed still more distinctly in this second instance. For here the community goes to work for the first time exclusively of the Apostles; and this business too evidently contains nothing less than a decisive moment. The very circumstance, that vigour was furnished to the community to oppose the corruption, furnishes first of all full satisfaction for the fact that in that very Church, whose existence had been inaugurated by a visible and palpable outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all, sin, not only Satanic, but that also which is common to human nature, found an access, infecting not individuals alone but also entire masses. The very fact that sufficient vigour of reaction against every disturbing force is contained not in any personal

virtue nor in any institution, but in the secret bosom of the community or Church, demonstrates that the Church, however exposed and subjected at all times to the disturbances of sin, is nevertheless the city of spiritual fulness. Therefore it is that our narrative has no intention to make that participation of the community (which in it is set forth as the principal matter) dependent on all sorts of conditions. For if, on the one hand, Olshausen represents the Apostolical purity of the members of the community as the condition, he overlooks the circumstance that the Apostolical purity receives its perfectly equivalent counterpoise in the unprecedented authority of the Apostles, which is here pushed into the background. And if, on the other, Löhe (see Aphorismen S. 86. 87.) insists that the office of the diaconate is to be regarded as somewhat insignificant, we must bear in mind that the corruption of the community had attacked precisely that very domain which comprised those who were qualified for the office in question.

We are not expressly told that this institution of the diaconate remedied the existing evil; we can however, with tolerably perfect confidence, infer from it, that the office was introduced into all the Apostolical Churches. Moreover, this result is clearly implied in the close of the narrative before us (ver. 7). For the increase of the word, the great multiplication of the members of the community, to which even a great company of the priests now joined themselves, cannot, in such a context, mean anything else than that the disturbances to which on the occasion of the distribution of the alms of the Society, selfishness had for some time given rise, were completely removed by the institution of the diaconate; and that the very thing which had threatened so much confusion would now, by means of the operation of the Spirit which dwelt within the Church, tend rather to the furtherance of the truth.

§ 12. STEPHEN THE FIRST MARTYR.

(Chap. vi. 8—Chap. vii. 50).

The election of deacons not only accomplished its more imme-

diate purpose, as the section we are now to consider and the course of the history will sufficiently shew, but it had, besides, consequences the most extensive and most beneficial. Further confirmation also will be furnished of the correctness of the view which saw nothing less than a principle in the conduct of the Apostles in the election of deacons. The fact, that notwithstanding the striking weakness exhibited at the time by the community, the Apostles had, however, more trust in the spirit of the Church than in the sufficiency of their own office, and set to work upon this conviction, was not only a remedy for the immediate evil, but a plenteous blessing also flowed upon the whole development of the Church from this very belief and confidence. Of those whom the confidence of the community had chosen from the midst of itself and elected to the office of deacon, Stephen stood at the head. That they had chosen wisely is immediately testified by St Luke, who forthwith mentions him before all others with laudatory titles. In the case of Stephen, it is intended that we should clearly see what a furtherance was effected by this organisation of the powers and gifts which were contained in the Church. Even as a member of the community, Stephen had already been distinguished by a fulness of faith and of the Holy Spirit (vi. 5), and now by the choice of the community and the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, he had received the appointment to an ecclesiastical office, and thereupon his qualifications are enhanced. He who was full of faith, is now full of grace ; he who was full of the Holy Spirit, is now full of power (ver. 8); by which we are to understand that the gifts which he possessed were disposed to activity.

His faith received thereby its corresponding measure of grace, and the Holy Spirit which he possessed, created in him the power to work outwardly on others. It is implied in the very nature of the thing that the manifestation of these special graces of the ministry was made in the very field over which he was placed. By the nature of the duties of his office of Deacon, Stephen was now brought into contact with people of all sorts, both within and out of the community ; and more especially with the sick and afflicted. Hence it might easily happen that the mere distribution of the alms of the Church—the object for which he was more immediately appointed, in very many of the cases which he

met with, would appear perfectly inadequate and useless. In such instances it was very natural for him, endowed as he was with such fullness of grace and power, to prove himself to be not only the bearer of corporeal gifts, but also of those spiritual gifts and powers which were indwelling in the apostolical community. And thus it came to pass that the Lord performed by the deacon Stephen great signs and wonders among the people. That which hitherto had manifested itself as the symbol of Apostolic power and dignity, appears in his case to be conferred upon one who was not of the number of the Apostles. The labours of Stephen, however, thus accompanied with signs and wonders, excited not only respect but also called forth opposition, and that not merely, as heretofore had been the case, from the chief authorities in Jerusalem, but also in various circles of the people, which up to this time had on the whole remained lovingly and reverently disposed towards the community and its leaders (vid. ii. 43, 47; iii. 10; iv. 21; v. 11; xiii. 26). But what must we suppose to have been the occasion of this? Those who entered into controversy with Stephen belonged not to that class of Jews who were born either in Jerusalem or in Palestine, but to those of the dispersion who had settled in Jerusalem chiefly from religious reasons (ver. 9). In the events of Pentecost, we have already become acquainted with this class as distinguished for their religious zeal; and we saw that a great majority of those who were among the first converts belonged to those Hellenistic Jews, whose wonder had been excited by the descent of the Holy Spirit. If, therefore, others of the same class remained unconverted, these, in all probability, were hindered from believing by the self-conceited, exclusive nature of their religion, which rejected everything new. In this light, probably, we are to regard the opponents of the deacon Stephen. And if, further, we also assume that to all appearance Saul (ver. 9), was a member of their Synagogue, (see Wieseler Chronologie d. Apostolischen Zeitalters p. 63), we can adopt this supposition more confidently, and shall be justified in regarding this Synogogue of Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem, when the more spiritual and finer elements in the Christian Church had passed over into the Christian Church, as the head quarters of fanatical Judaism. If we now reflect that both on account of his name and also because the diaconate had been created especially with

a view to the neglected Hellenists, Stephen must himself be considered a Hellenist (see Neander, History of the Planting of the Church, &c., p. 47), it soon becomes clear that, by his prominent position and activity in the Church, Stephen, thus naturally brought into contrast with the Hellenists, must necessarily, considering their fanatical sentiments, have excited their suspicion and their hostility.

If we take this view of the origin of the conflict with the people in which the community was now involved, we can easily form a conception of its further course. In her previous collisions with the external world, the Church had hitherto proceeded on a large scale of grandeur and magnitude. The Apostles appealed to the masses, and these appeals had made an overpowering and convincing impression, or else they spoke before the authorities, and there they had provoked a harsh and indignant opposition. And when we look to the whole people, on them it had called forth only general impressions, and that too as it were by sudden starts. The collision of Stephen with the Hellenists we are now to speak of was of another kind. On the one hand his position and activity, and on the other the sentiments of these Jews soon brought about in this case a mutual antagonism (*ἀνέστησα—συζητοῦντες*). Since therefore, Stephen, by his official activity and endowments, was forced into this conflict with the Hellenistic zealots, he is furnished, according to the promise of the Word, with all the armour that was necessary for him. It was even the same that the Lord had promised to his disciples for such contests with their opponents (Luke xxi. 15). The promise, for instance, that their adversaries should be struck dumb before the spiritual energy of the witnesses of Christ receives its first accomplishment, as Luke in c. vi. 10 informs us, in the case of Stephen, in conflict with the Hellenists. But as the Hellenists previously refuse, as we shall presently see, to be convinced by the testimony of Stephen, so would they not be put to silence until the thoughts of their hearts had been more clearly and plainly revealed. And if to these still growing revelations of their inmost feelings, Stephen opposed the incontrovertible words of his wisdom and his spirit, we must suppose that on each occasion he drew forth from his abundance that which was best calculated to meet the several displays of Jewish opposition. Now, we must bear in mind that Peter had opened his preaching

to the people, with describing, as having already arrived, the dawning of those last days of which the end is to be that great day of the Lord announced beforehand by fearful signs both in Heaven and on Earth, and that he made salvation from the horrors and sufferings which are to accompany its arrival dependent on the calling upon the name of Jesus. Resting on this foundation, St Peter, on every occasion when he referred with hope to the salvation of Israel, insisted strongly on the necessary conditions of a change of mind on the part of the people who had hitherto manifested much hostility to the name of Jesus, and of a reliance in faith on the name and words of Christ (ii. 38; iii. 19, 26; v. 31). In one instance the non-performance of this one condition of all salvation had already been distinctly manifested even in Israel. The supreme authorities of the people have exhibited so little of a change of spirit that on the contrary they have renewed their early opposition to the name of Jesus, and are so far removed from a faithful acceptation of that name which was alone powerful to save, that they endeavour as far as possible to eradicate it from the minds and to silence it in the mouths of men. Will the people follow their authorities in this direction? In the earliest contest between the Apostles and the Sanhedrim the people stood resolutely on the side of the Apostles (v. 26). But it was in truth the same people, who, within a few days, had changed its Hosannas to Jesus unto the cry of "Crucify Him." Now, Stephen, as we have seen, was enabled both by his character and external position, to test the feelings and disposition of the people more deeply than they had hitherto allowed them to be manifested; and Stephen has to make the bitter experience that this commencing opposition on the part of the Hellenists would not yield either to his expositions or attestations, but that, on the contrary, it will become the more violent. In the same proportion, however, as the fulfillment of the condition laid down by Peter is frustrated, the hope also which it had excited must disappear, while the destruction threatened in the first discourse of Peter became the more imminent. If we keep constantly in view these intimations which are afforded by the facts themselves as to the course of things, we shall be the better able to understand the hostile feeling which now began to be entertained towards

Stephen, and especially the odious charge which was brought against him.

The embittered Hellenists suborned false witnesses who accused Stephen of blaspheming against Moses and God (ver. 11), or, as they expressed it: "This man ceases not to speak against this holy place and against the law, for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy the city and change the customs which Moses delivered us (vv. 13, 14). Baur (see his Apost. Paulus, p. 56) and Zeller (ubi. supra S. 77, 78), pretend to understand the matter better than our informant, and persist that the witnesses were not false, and that Stephen had spoken precisely as he was accused of doing. Now, in truth, if people will find pleasure in devising to themselves another Stephen, who is to be set free from all connection with the community at Jerusalem, and also from his own people, they may, if they will, set up such an imaginary character. But if we are content to remain on the sure ground of history, it will then appear that these expressions, which were charged against Stephen, were distorted and wrested from their necessary context, and thereby were made to assume an hostile and hateful character. Now, in the first place, to fix our attention on the accusation which, both as to form and matter, can be most certainly brought home to Stephen, it is that which we find in the 14th ver. How, in the absence of a perfectly necessary and express intimation, could an Israelite, who was vividly conscious of his own connection with the sacred history of his people (such as, judging from his whole defence, Stephen evidently was), arrive at the idea of the destruction of the holy city, and of an alteration of the Mosaic laws and customs? Further, how should a man who enjoyed such respect among the community of Jerusalem indulge in hostile expressions against the Holy Place, and against the customs of Israel, whereas in the whole of the previous conduct of his community and in the hopes avowed by the Apostles, both were firmly held to be holy and divine, unless in the mean time a circumstance had occurred, which necessarily exercised a great influence on the position of the believers in Jesus relatively to these matters? Let us now bear in mind (we have seen that we are justified by certain intimations, nay constrained to infer) that Stephen, in conformity with the command received from his Lord, and in

unison with the discourse of Peter, dwelt, in his controversies with the zealous Hellenists, upon the necessity of faith and repentance as the sole conditions of salvation and redemption, but that they rejected these conditions, appealed to the inviolability of the sanctuary, and to the merit of the fulfillment of ordinances. Let us further consider, that Stephen had observed from day to day how this appeal to, and reliance on, the sanctuary and on ordinances, in opposition to the requisitions of faith and repentance, grew more and more firmly fixed in their hearts, and how this hardening against and rejection of the salvation offered to them in the name of Jesus spread more and more widely among the people. In short, if we form a just conception of that which is historically confirmed to us of the relation in which St Stephen stood to the Hellenists, what other course was left for Stephen than to infer that the consequences of an opposition so stiffnecked, which became every day more general, were already at hand—the consequences already set forth by Peter, and with which Jesus had threatened them, nay, against which all the prophets from Moses downwards had warned the people? Peter, indeed, from the very beginning, had announced the new times as bringing about a twofold decision; ruin and destruction for all who refuse to call upon the name of Jesus, but quickening and restoration for the penitent and faithful believer. What, therefore, Peter had set forth only as an hypothesis, that Stephen must have brought forward as an inevitable result, in proportion as, according to his experience, the hypothesis, in its worse alternative, had become a matter of reality. If now he ascribes to Jesus the fulfilment of this judgment; this, it is true, is what Peter had not expressly stated, but yet had sufficiently implied; for if Jesus had retired into the inmost heavens, (iii. 21), in order though invisible to bless them with power for the conversion from iniquity (ver. 26), and to bestow a new mind and forgiveness of sins, and as soon as the internal conditions of his kingdom should be fulfilled, to establish it also externally (iii. 20, 21), it becomes self-evident that if, for this kingdom's sake, judgment is to be held and punishment inflicted, this duty must appertain to the Lord of Heaven. Moreover, that this judgment and punishment by Jesus was to be directed against the Holy City was not, perhaps, so much the invention of Stephen as it was incontrovertibly

given in that coincidence of history and revelation at which Stephen then stood.

When of old the prophet Jeremiah exhorted the House of Judah to repentance that it might not be removed by a similar judgment to that which had carried Israel away, there were many who opposed the prophet with lying words saying, "the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these" (Jer. vii. 4). It was even this cry of the impenitent in Jerusalem, which, through its reference and application, became even a word of lies, that caused Jehovah to direct His word of threatening especially against the Temple, in the possession of which these men boasted (Jer. vii. 11—15). Since, therefore, Jerusalem would not be converted, and Jeremiah, on the contrary, was exposed, on account of his threats, to exactly the same treatment as Stephen here meets with, for he was accused of being an enemy to the holy city (see Jer. xxvi. 11, 12), Jerusalem with its sanctuary was therefore rejected, as Shilo had before been. As the same cause was in operation, the same effect would naturally follow in the present case. With the destruction of the holy city another necessary consequence is intimately associated, for which we can likewise discover an analogous instance in the Old Testament. The ruin of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple was followed by the total dispersion of Israel among the Heathen (comp. Jer. vii. 15). Now, in such a state of things, the service of the Temple of Jehovah, around which as their centre all the statutes and ordinances of Israel revolved, must cease; and that must come to pass which Azariah, the son of Oded, had threatened, (2 Chron. xv. 1—7), and what after him Hosea (iii. 4) and Jeremiah (Lamen. ii. 7—9) repeated, that Israel should sit without a sanctuary, without an altar, and without a law. But even under the Old Testament, and in the sure expectation of a state of lawlessness for Israel, as Azariah, the son of Oded, nevertheless did not lose all hope, but was able to exhort his countrymen to take comfort, and to be strong and undismayed, we may easily conceive that Stephen would be in a position to go a step farther without departing in the least from his true historical relation to his people. Upon Stephen, namely, as a man full of faith in Jesus, and full of the spirit of Jesus, a clear conviction had arisen, that however Israel might himself depart, and even

though by his perseverance in impenitence he should bring about the destruction of the holy city, the community of Jesus would not cease to exist, and that it would then be the true and spiritual continuation of Israel, the chosen people of God. If, therefore, this true and spiritual Israel must and was to be without a temple, then naturally it cannot be intended that it should continue any longer attached to the law of Moses and the ordinances of Israel; but that out of its fulness of the Spirit it would form for itself new ordinances and new customs in conformity with its new circumstances. Thus only can we explain the fact, that to Jesus, who had founded this new Israel, and had continued to preserve and guide it, not only the abolition of the Mosaic dispensation, but the establishment of new ordinances, can be imputed. But at the same time, it also becomes clear to us in this way, that this assertion of Stephen points by no means to any sudden or violent change in the development of things; but that, like everything else, it is obviously connected and consistent with the previous history of the Christian community, as well as with the whole history of Israel.

Now that those who found it better and more convenient to place their reliance on the possession of the temple, and on ceremonial observances, than to betake themselves to a change of heart and to faith in Jesus, should, partly involuntarily and partly to fortify themselves against this convincing force, so understand and so represent these declarations of Stephen, as if they had been directed against the temple and the law merely as such (ver. 13), will not surprise us in the least, especially if we keep before our eyes the historical analogies already pointed out. And when such a view of his words had been once taken, it was easy enough to go a step further, and so to give them the turn, as if Stephen had spoken blasphemously both against Moses and against God Himself (ver. 11). For if Stephen spoke of a people of God, independent of the Mosaic ordinances, the divine authority of Moses would seem thereby to be prejudiced; and if, according to him, the temple, so far from affording protection, should even be itself given over to destruction, this too might easily be regarded as blasphemy against God, who filled His house with His glory. Now the very fact of such assertions being brought forward against Stephen by the fanatical party of the

Hellenists, and confirmed by the public testimony of the false witnesses, occasioned a violent excitement among the people, at that period so easily exciteable, and of nothing more sensitive than of whatever seemed to touch their religious superiority. Here, then, for the first time we behold the people leagued with the elders and scribes against the witnesses to evangelical truth (ver. 12). Things threaten to take the same turn as they so obviously did in the history of Jesus. True it is that the people do not proceed either to decide or to act independently; they are persuaded by their governors and leaders to adopt a hostile feeling and course of action. It is, besides, no mean or secondary motive which serves to excite the people; but its passions are roused in behalf of all that is highest and holiest. Still, with all this it is quite clear that the good and salutary impression which had been made upon them by the discourses and deeds of the Apostles, and by the whole life and character of the community, had been only superficial; the people themselves have so far sinned as they had not guarded and cherished in love and in truth this impression of the Holy Ghost.

When, therefore, on this occasion the Sanhedrim assembled to sit in judgment on a witness to Jesus, it found itself in a very different position from its former one. In the first place it was conscious of having the support of the people in any hostile measures it might adopt against the Gospel, while, on the previous occasion, a fear of the people had forced it to follow a more moderate course (v. 26). Moreover, on the present occasion there was, besides, this further advantage, that the crime imputed admitted far more readily than the former of being shewn to be one deserving of death. As soon, therefore, as the business was commenced, and the witnesses had given their evidence against him, Stephen could not fail to have had a presentiment of the great danger which threatened him. We have already found that this man, promoted from and by the community, was endowed by the Lord with the apostolic gifts of speaking and of working miracles; and even in his present position he reminds us of the suffering apostles. In the sufferings which they underwent for the sake of the name of Christ they saw nothing but honour, and rejoiced thereat (see v. 41). Stephen glances at the Sanhedrim and beholds nothing but hatred and malice, and the fate of his Lord must have

recurred to his soul; but instead of being alarmed or dismayed, the stedfastness of his inward peace, the certainty of victory and joy were so strong and mighty in him, that his face shone as the face of an angel (vi. 15). Zeller no doubt is right when he affirms, in contradiction to Neander, "these words are not merely intended to describe an expression commanding respect, but really an objective fact, and in truth an extraordinary phenomenon (ubi supra P. 83). We, however, do not, with Bauer and Zeller, regard this assertion, either as legendary or as arising from a conscious endeavour to glorify the history of Stephen, but much rather a supernatural effect of the Spirit of Jesus, which filled with heavenly light and joy the soul of the first martyr in the moment of his last and greatest need. This trait will be found to be in the most perfect unison, not only with all the preceding facts, but also with the last issue and event of the history of Stephen. With respect to the earlier history, we refer to the triumph of the Apostles over the first contumely they were exposed to, (v. 41), and if the lighting up of the face of Stephen was unquestionably something supernatural, so also was his speech and his demeanour down to his very last breath, and this is in itself the confirmation and proof of that phenomenon.

In the first place, we must submit the speech of Stephen to a close examination. It has always been pronounced a great difficulty to prove the appropriateness of this discourse to the occasion on which it was uttered. Accordingly, hypotheses, of one kind or other, have constantly been brought forward, which it was thought would make it easy to bring greater or lesser portions of the discourse into—at best a very loose, if indeed any,—connection with the historical position of the speaker, as described to us. It is obvious that such attempts are of a suspicious nature, and for this reason Bengel places at the head of his own exposition of this speech, an earnest warning against such superficial methods. But he has not succeeded any better than his predecessors, or than the commentators which immediately followed him, in establishing a satisfactory connection between the discourse and the occasion on which it was delivered. Of older writers, I find the clearest light thrown on the leading thoughts of this discourse, by Crusius, who, in his Prophetic Theology vol. I., p. 251, has incidentally touched upon it. But these remarks have met with the same

neglect as many other profound and valuable thoughts of the same writer on the prophetic contents of Holy Scripture, and were either overlooked at the time they appeared, or else have been forgotten by the succeeding age. In recent times, it is due to Baur to acknowledge the essential service he has rendered towards facilitating the solution of this difficult question. He shews, namely, in the Tubingen Weihnacht's Programm for 1829, that the object which Stephen had in view, in his appeal to the Old Testament history, was to shew that the people of Israel, throughout the whole of its past history, has exhibited hostility to the revelations of God. In this statement we have certainly due prominence given to an important point, previously overlooked, for elucidating the aim of the whole discourse; it is however only one point thereof, and not by any means the whole purpose of the matter. And since Baur, even in his later analysis of the discourse of Stephen, which he has given us in his Treatise on Paul (p. 43—50), does not clearly work out his theory, and is himself forced to confess (p. 45) that the first part of the speech contains nothing to support his view of its principal point, and that consequently it does not appear to be associated with the whole and with the general object, except in the loose manner mentioned above, Zeller evidently attributes too much to Baur, when he calls him "the first discoverer of the true purpose and connection of the discourse" (see ubi. supra. p. 79). At any rate the exposition of the connection given by F. Luger, in his Monographie über Zweck, Inhalt, und Eigen thümlichkeit der Rede des Stephanus, Lübeck, 1838, goes far beyond Bauer's view, and shews that many other important points have to be taken into consideration in order to understand the coherence throughout, and especially to connect the first portion with the whole, sentence by sentence. At any rate, we can, in the first place, meet the critical school, with their own avowal, that the connection between the discourse and the historical occasion of its delivery is so obscure, that to be understood, it requires a formal discovery of its meaning. For in this fact there is assuredly involved an infallible token, that such a discourse is neither supposititious nor imaginary, but that it grew out of the inner and hidden germ of actual circumstances. Since Luke has handed down to us the speech of Stephen, and since the speech itself, both in general and particular, as we shall presently see still more clearly

perceive, bears on it the unmistakeable impress of intrinsic propriety and originality. The difficulty on which criticism has laid so much stress, as to the means by which the speech came into the hands of our informant, is however to be made very light of; and it is quite sufficient to be able to point to a source, which lay very near to him—to Saul of Tarsus—who was afterwards the Apostle Paul.

In their opposition to Jesus, and now also to Stephen, the Jews appealed to the Prophets and to their relation to God, and this relation they brought prominently forward in order to escape these requirements of faith and repentance which were made upon them. That in so doing they viewed the relation in a wrong light, is clear enough, since all these ministers of the divine word, which insisted on faith and repentance, desired and strove after nothing else than the perfection of this very relation. Considering the mutual connection of the two parties bound together by this relation, it was impossible to distort one limb of it without at the same time displacing the other from its true position. So is it here; both the nature of God and the nature of the people is misunderstood and perverted. In the threat of Stephen, that if Israel would not turn to Jesus and be converted in faith, He would destroy the holy place, they saw only blasphemy (v. 11). They must consequently have supposed the God of Israel to be in such wise tied to this locality, that every violation of it would at the same time affect His essence. But what is that, but to place the God of Israel, the God of Heaven and earth, upon an equal footing with the gods of the heathen? and to tie Him down to the narrow limits of this world? If, on the other hand, they considered their privileges as a nation to be inviolable, and therefore when Stephen set before them the probability that, if Israel persevered in its alienation from Jesus, a people of God would arise with entirely new ordinances and other customs than those established by Moses, they regarded this as a blasphemy against Moses and against the law (v. 11, 13); this also rested upon an equally strong insensibility to their deeply rooted perversity and depravity as a people of God. A more striking method of demonstrating the twofold misconception which was involved in the opposition of the Jews to the Gospel could not well have been devised, than the historical one which Stephen has here adopted, which by an appeal to

the facts of that very past which the Jews vainly imagined was in their favour, and which in their condemnation of Stephen they rested on, had for its object to establish the justification of the Gospel and the fruitlessness of the Jewish opposition to it. Ought we to wonder, then, if Stephen—a man whose wisdom and spirit has the praise that the Jews were put to silence in presence of them; who had already been proved and exercised in this very controversy, (vv. 9, 10), and of whom finally it is said that in the midst of the raging and threatening Sanhedrim, an immoveable heavenly serenity and brightness was accorded him, (see ver. 15) —shall we wonder if he, when called upon for his answer, should have adopted this method?

Stephen traced the history of Israel from its very first beginnings to the highest climax that it reached in the Old Testament; and since three periods are to be found therein, the times of the Patriarchs, (see vii. 2—16); the times of Moses, (17—43); and the times of David and Solomon, (44—50), he brings out of each of these periods those points and events which, in contrast with the Jewish prejudices with which Stephen had to combat, served to set the relation between God and his people in their proper light. Since it is incumbent on us to trace the calm and orderly progress in the first development of the Church, as it is set before us in the Apostolical history, and on the other hand to combat the opinion which maintains, that we have here in Stephen's discourse the sudden and violent outbreak of the true Christian principle in opposition to the Old Testament Judaism and to the original Christianity of the Apostles, (an opinion in which the modern critics agree very closely with the members of the Sanhedrim), we cannot well avoid the task of following the chief points in his speech, which afford no unimportant confirmation of our own view of it.

After an introduction, in which the accused evinces alike his boldness and his reverence, Stephen begins by bringing forward the commencement of the history of Israel, the call of Abraham. We are sufficiently prepared to recognise in the beginning of this discourse not so much historical reminiscences as rather an apologetical view of that history. The very first words with which he commences his historical retrospect are, as Bengel has already remarked, at once characteristic. Since he places at the very com-

mencement of his discourse, " The God of Glory," he seems to intimate that the whole relation between Jehovah and Israel, at its very beginning, depended purely upon the absolute free grace of God. Bengel says : Magnifica appellatio innuit, Deo Abrahamum et se totum et posteritatem et terram et bona omnia sibi posterisque promissa et exhibita in acceptis et nil expensum retulisse. If now we take a survey of those facts in the history of Abraham which are brought forward, we shall find them in the strictest accord with those opening words. It is evidently the speaker's first concern to throw out, as prominently as possible, the gradual and successive character of God's dealings with Abraham, and with this end in view he closely follows the Scriptural narrative, and adduces ten principal successive stages: 1. The call of Abraham in Ur of Chaldea (vv. 2, 3) ; 2. his removal to Haran (ver. 4) ; 3. his Father's death in Haran (ver. 4) ; 4. his journey to Canaan (ver. 4) ; 5. his not having the least inheritance in the land of Canaan (ver. 5) ; 6. his living there childless (ver. 5) ; 7. his prospect of the four hundred years of oppression for his posterity (ver. 6) ; 8. his own circumcision (ver. 8) ; 9. the birth (ver 8) ; and 10. the circumcision of Isaac. Of what importance it was in the mind of Stephen to bring this slowly progressive character of the history of Abraham home to the consciences of his hearers, becomes especially clear from the fact of his dwelling upon three points which, in the Mosaic narrative, do not obviously present themselves, but are only to be recognized upon a closer examination of it. In the Mosaic account the express calling of Abraham by Jehovah, is first mentioned when his residence in Haran is spoken of, but we have no wants of proof in this history to show that Abraham took an independent share in the emigration of the children of Terah from Ur into Haran (see Theolog. Commmentar z. A. T. 1, 1, 164). To this the very earliest and hidden beginning of the call of Abraham does the speaker go back in order to be able to show still more clearly the gradual progress of the history. In the next place he lays great stress upon the fact that Abraham had passed into Canaan after the death of his father. It is shown by chronology that Terah yet lived, when Abraham went to Canaan, but in the narrative it was deemed necessary to inform us of the death of Terah before it spoke of Abraham's journey into

Canaan (see Gen. xi. 31), and this for the purpose of showing that for the commencement of the new relation which Jehovah designed to form with the human race, Abraham would be taken into consideration not as associated with, but as separate from Terah. In this way the prominence given in Scripture to the mention of the death of Terah, justifies the adoption of it as an especial step in the gradual development of the history of Abraham. The justification of this view is derived from that perfectly inviolable article of the creed of inspiration, which bids us regard not only what is narrated in Scripture, but also the very order and combination in which it is mentioned ; as also from the questions and answers composed by the Rabbis upon this very subject (see Schottgen and Lightfoot ad h. l.) it follows that even irrespectively of all desire to find a harmony, the passage in Genesis itself offers us the key to the remark made by Stephen. Finally in the words of Jehovah to Abraham concerning the future destiny of his race, Stephen employs an expression which was not till a later period addressed to Moses. The conclusion, namely, of ver. 7 : καὶ λατρεύσουσί μοι ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ is first found in Exod. iii. 12, and leads Moses to expect that Israel, after its deliverance from Egypt, should serve Jehovah on Horeb, the Mount of God. But from the context in which we here find the words, Canaan only, and not the locality of the mountain in the wilderness, can be intended. This is indeed another reference ; but still not " a false one," as De Wette adds. The true connection between the worship on Horeb and that in the promised land has already been pointed out by Bengel in the following words : " Cultus in Horebo valde fuit a populo imminutus (ver. 40) et potius tandem in ingressu terræ Canaan praestitus (ver. 45). If, therefore, according to this view this reference must be considered at any rate as justifiable, still even in this connection it is far from the speaker's purpose, and simply on this account, there must be some more definite object to be discovered in the proleptic employment of these words. This view, in one of its aspects at least, has already been rightly set forth by Bengel : hæc ita contexens, nervose ostendit, illud quod Mosi dictum erat de cultu Israelis erga Deum, jam Abrahami tempore divinitus intentum et significatum esse). But regarded in another light the object was even this : To draw attention to the fact, that although this pro-

spect was opened even in the times of Abraham, yet that its fulfilment was kept back not only by a long interval from the times in which it was given, but also by difficult and intricate complications. After we have thus shown, in the three most striking features of this reference of our discourse to the history of Abraham, the intention as well as the justification of the speaker in regarding its gradual development as a most important characteristic of this history, it is an easy matter to show that it is equally true also of his whole exposition of the history of Abraham. For after these remarks the object of Stephen presents itself so obviously to the mind, that no doubt can be entertained of it; while even the narrative of Moses is evidently so constructed as to bring clearly to our perception, the gradation and gradual character of the development in the early history of Israel. We have no wish to lay any stress on the fact, that even the Jews enumerated ten trials in the life of Abraham, but we may reasonably point out how clearly even at the very commencement of the independent history of Abraham the whole course and final aim of the entire development is set forth from the first (vv. 2, 3) in order to signify forthwith that several degrees would have to be surmounted before this height could be attained. First of all Abraham is shown the land of promise (ver. 1). But Abraham is no sooner in the land than it is remarked, that the Canaanites dwelt in the land, and therefore that no possession remained for Abraham therein (see ver. 6). In agreement therewith, immediately afterwards occur, the very promise of the land to the seed of Abraham (ver. 7). We are, however, already aware that not only has Abraham no son, but that also his wife is barren (xi. 29), and in this way we might go through the whole history of Abraham, and with but little trouble point out this character of gradual development which marks and pervades it.

Now, however, the question arises how this distinguishing feature of the history of Abraham is connected with the prominent position, which in the very opening Stephen assigns to the God of Glory, and what, accordingly, is the connection between these two points and the whole tendency of his discourse. As for the connection between the first and second point: that is indicated clearly enough, even by the grammatical construction, since the account of the several distinct stages in the history of Abraham

for the most part is constructed in such sort, that the "God of Glory" forms the determining subject. The impressive phrase at the commencement *ὁ θεὸς τῆς δόξης* is the subject of the following statements at different stages; of *ὤφθη*, ver. 2, of *κατοικῆσαι αὐτόν* ver. 2; and also of that which corresponds with it *μετῴκισεν αὐτόν* (ver. 4), *οὐκ ἔδωκεν* (ver. 5) *ἐπηγγείλατο*, for the promise of the seed become a new step even because as yet there is no child; and also in the following enumeration of different steps the same subject is by a repetition of the reference again taken up; *ἐλάλησε* (ver. 6) *ἔδωκεν* (ver. 8). If, then, other degrees are grammatically to be referred to Abraham or the Patriarchs, still in the back ground even of these statements the God of Glory stands out unmistakeably as the efficient and influencing cause. So that we must necessarily regard Him, not only as the author and beginner of the whole development, but as conducting and determining its gradual progressive advancement. It is in this circumstance that we are to recognise Jehovah as the God of glory—that He, according to his free purpose and grace, orders the beginning of the history of Abraham, and overrules and governs every step of its development, by His infinite wisdom and might.

In this view of the beginning of the history of Israel lay a most significant and important contrast to the perversity of the Jews. Every proof of the absolute being and power of God, drawn from the past history of Israel, furnished a powerful weapon against the delusion which looked upon God as bound to one locality or to one building, and considered itself as sure of Him as of an assured possession? But precisely as the beginning of the history of Israel distinctly exhibits the absolute majesty of Jehovah, the more striking, significant, and decisive is this commencement with respect to all the subsequent developments. It is however not only the character of absoluteness in general, which, in this fundamental revelation of Jehovah, might have convinced the Jews of their folly; but no less so the peculiar manner in which this absolute independence of God, declares itself from the very first. The Jews demand of Jesus that he should manifest his power and glory before the eyes of the whole world, if they were to acknowledge Him; and just the same desire was now again exhibited in the first days of the Church, for even the wisest and most moderate words of those Jews who were alienated from the

Gospel, were these, "it would be prudent to withhold our decision until we should see whether the preaching of Jesus should maintain itself or come to nought," (vv. 38, 39). It was therefore only on this contingency that the least prejudiced would fix their faith upon Jesus; if the might of his kingdom should first be openly manifested. Thus did the Jews prescribe laws to the Lord as to the manner and form in which He should establish his kingdom; and especially they demanded, that he should immediately realise and exhibit the end of all things. How vain and impertinent does such a desire of the Jews appear, as soon as we contrast it with the commencement of the revelation and working of Jehovah in Israel! Here, in the clear mirror of holy writ, it is shewn that it is Jehovah alone who determines and appoints the order and succession of His own revelations; and especially that His revelation and grace are so far from being accomplished and perfected in a moment of time, that a gradual and slow progression forms the leading and distinctive feature of this work of God. This view of the relation of Stephen's speech to the case before us, had in all its essential points been set forth by Crusius (ibid) in the following passage: Stephanus toto sermone amplissime cœpto id agebat, ut exemplis majorum illustratet Deum illustrissimos homines eosq; jam posteris tam venerabiles, longe aliter ad istam excellentiam perduxisse, quam mundus opinetur fieri debuisse. Haec exempla translaturus erat Stephanus ad praesentem quaestionem, sitne credibile quod Jesus sit Christus, quoniam non sit talis Messias qualem voluerint carnales Judæorum proceres.

As the history of Isaac furnished no important matter for the confirmation of this view, Stephen passes on to that of Jacob, and to that very portion of it in which the chosen race for the first time diffuses itself into a number of different individuals. And here occur other elements in support of Stephen's apologetic object. As soon as the family of promise and of blessing comprises a plurality of persons, an intrinsic antagonism springs up at once. And this opposition extends the more widely, and penetrates the deeper, since, by the overwhelming majority, the bad overpowers the few elements of good, and consequently remains alone on the field. That Stephen did regard the history of Jacob in this light, is clear from the connection between the 8th and 9th verses, since the phrase *οἱ πατριάρχαι* takes up again the

foregoing expression, τοὺς δώδεκα πατριάρχας. Accordingly the house of Israel appears so unnaturally divided, that by far the greater part, although in marked opposition to the spirit and essence of this house, represents it externally; whereas, on the contrary, the minority in whom its spirit and essence still actively live, has, so far as regards its outward aspect, entirely disappeared. And this intrinsic opposition between the essence and the external manifestation does not attain to an adjustment, until God, whose grace and might formed from the very beginning the essential constituent in this whole domain, unites Himself with the excluded portion, and manifests Himself to it by His blessing, while the other part, which represents the external house of Israel, is oppressed by want and famine. But further: the confusion in this family, which had been occasioned by this evil antagonism, is eventually removed as soon as the outwardly excluded portion, by means of the divine presence and grace imparted to it, is reconciled to the other, (which, it is true, is the outward representative of the whole of Israel, but is fallen into want and suffering,) and by such reception heals the schism which had taken place, and once more embraces in brotherly union the authors of this unnatural strife. But here again we have a marked emphasis laid on the fact, that this reconciliation of Joseph with his brethren did not take place at their first meeting, but was postponed to the second (ver. 13), whereby we are once more reminded of gradual progression as forming the fundamental law in these matters. This reunion of the banished Joseph with his family is to be regarded as only preliminary; for it takes place in a spot which is not amenable to the laws of the Holy Scripture; namely, in Egypt, not in Canaan. This want of fitness is most distinctly manifested in the fact, that Jacob as well as Joseph, who though they are the normal representatives of the holy house of Israel, die in Egypt, but found their final resting place not in this foreign land, but in the land of promise (ver. 16, comp. Flacius and Bengel in hunc locum).

Now in this second portion of the history of the Patriarchs, the corrupt nature of the people arrives both at a manifestation and development. But it is not only the fact of an original perversity in Israel—against which, however, the opponents of Stephen must have obstinately closed their eyes, when they appealed to their

connection with these beginnings of their nation, by means of the customs and institutions of their Fathers—that is here laid before our view, but also the very law which regulated the phenomenon of this perversity and its removal. And this alone can have been the motive of Stephen's dwelling so long upon this complication. At the very first collision that took place within the House of Israel, we have it presented to the mind as possible that Israel, in its outward manifestation, might fall away totally from the spirit and the essence of the House of Promise, and none but an almost evanescent portion remain true to it; that the former part might bear in its person every outward sign of unbroken connexion with the holy past, where the latter might have adopted many Gentile customs and manners. How obvious in all this was the reference to the present! Was not the old envy of the house of Israel against the chosen and the beloved again awakened at this time? had they not leagued together and conspired to betray Him and to sell him to strangers? And does not the circumstance almost obtrude itself on our notice, that He who had been sold and betrayed—He who, as none other had, had in him the spirit of the house—meets with that reception and acknowledgment among strangers which in his own house was denied him. Were not the Magi from the land of the east the first who acknowledged Him? Was not the faith of the Roman centurion—the faith of the Canaanitish woman—as much as the faith of the very best in Israel? Must not these facts, and the words of the Lord in reference to them, become full of life and meaning, now that Israel is ever more and more disposing and preparing itself to reject the testimony of the Holy Ghost, against which its rulers and governors had already decided? But even if Israel in his collective character goes on to complete this rejection, which is already on its course, still the history of Joseph is a guarantee that the spirit and essence of the house of Israel will not, therefore, cease to have a reality and an existence in the earth. The Joseph of the New Testament may even, as much as the Joseph of the Old, not only find a reception and recognition among the Gentiles, but also so modify the ordinances and laws of the Gentiles as to render them serviceable for the revelation and publication of His Spirit (comp. Gen. xlvii. 13—27). Have we not here the authority of the Old Testament for the

assertion of Stephen: *Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ἀλλάξει τὰ ἔθη ἃ παρέδωκεν ὁ Μωϋσῆς* (see vi. 14)? It was this typical moment in the history of Joseph that Stephen had before his eyes; and that he thereby deals a heavy blow on his opponents is as certain as that he was perfectly justified by the history in so doing. And of this, indeed, there has ever been a feeling; only that the typical has been sought for rather in the details and incidental matter (see Vitringa Observ. Sacr. 11. 532—548) than in the fundamental ideas that were brought forward.

Stephen next passes on to the history of Moses, on which he dwells longest of all, without doubt, because his opponents appealed chiefly and preferably to Moses, and, on the other hand, charged him with speaking against Moses. Here also the object of the speaker is no other than to exhibit the history of Moses in such a light as to extract from it evidence in his favour and against his accusers. But in all this again the objective matter of the description is so predominant that it is only by close and rigorous attention that the reader discerns the object of the speaker. In the first place due regard must be paid to the fact that Stephen represents Moses not so much as a lawgiver as rather in his character of a deliverer and a leader. On this account he opens the section with reminding his hearers of the misery and oppression in which Israel was involved when the time for the promised Restoration arrived (vv. 17—19). The small number of persons who originally made up the house of Israel had multiplied so greatly as to become a great nation, but essentially it ought to be called a great multitude rather than a people, for it was in the land and in the power of a foreign prince. In this state of dependence and bondage, what Israel most wants is a head to unite and to organise the multitude. Now, in the person of Moses such a head for their redemption and deliverance is silently and secretly preparing for the people. But here also once more the principle of absolute freedom and independence is exhibited in all that God does for the emancipation of Israel. The comeliness of the new-born child of Amram and Jochabed is even that which is pleasing to God (ver. 20) a fact which Stephen knows, from the very circumstance that the Spirit of God has given the praise of beauty to the child Moses for an everlasting memorial in holy writ (Exod. ii. 2). This well-pleasingness to God is, therefore,

the ground why this child was chosen by Jehovah, and prepared to be the Saviour of Israel. But now as this cause of the divine favour is a hidden one, so the absolute free will of God in relation to Israel is shewn much more in what he publicly does with regard to this child with a view to qualify him to be the deliverer of his people. The character in which Moses has to appear before his countrymen is a very peculiar one. Moses was taken from out the midst of his people, educated in a heathen court as a scion of the royal family, and instructed in the wisdom of the Egyptians. It is in such a character that he presents himself for the first time to the people of Israel as their redeemer (vv. 21, 22). And when, moreover, he is called the second time, he is likewise in a foreign and remote country; and if Jehovah appears to him a by visible manifestation, it is neither at Hebron, nor at Beersheba, nor in any other sacred spot of the land of promise, but in the wilderness (ver. 30). Consequently the power and operation of God in preparing and adapting the means of the deliverance of His people, do not appear to be tied or bound either to any nationality, or to any special locality, but as resting purely on his own free pleasure.

But at the same time and in the same history the essential characteristic of the people of Israel is no less clearly shewn. When Moses for the first time appears before the people in the discharge of his duties as their redeemer and deliverer, they are so far from recognizing his vocation that he was obliged to withdraw in flight from his own countrymen (vv. 23—29). When Moses appears the second time, furnished with signs and wonders, he finds credence it is true; he leads Israel forth and gives them his laws, and ordinances, and political constitution. But yet this good understanding between Israel and their deliverer and leader, was very far indeed from being permanent; on the contrary, even in the very time of the most glorious of the manifestations of Jehovah, a backsliding occurs so deep and universal that Jehovah from that time abandons them and gives them over to the worship of the heathen idols (ver. 42).

However, these fundamental principles of opposition to Judaism, which Stephen draws from the history of Israel, shape themselves in a particular manner in this, the second portion. Stephen, for instance, brings emphatically forward the fact, that he who called

and accompanied Moses was "the angel of the Lord" (vv. 30, 35). Now, what must be the bearing of this intentional observation, if it be not an indication that we have to see here nothing more than a preparatory revelation of Jehovah, but that a final one was to follow in which Jehovah was to reveal himself, not by another, but by himself (comp. Theol. comm. i. i. 195, 196). Without such a purpose, indeed, the revelation of Moses would have been useless and in vain; since collectively the people so soon fell away again. Now, in fact, we are directed to look for such a repetition of the call and mission of Moses by a most expressive declaration of Moses himself in ver. 37. There cannot be a doubt that Stephen believes this prophecy to have been accomplished in the person of Jesus of Nazareth (comp. iii. 22, 23). In fact, the condition of Israel at this time was very similar to what it was when they were in Egypt. The House of Israel was numerous enough, but now also it was without freedom and independence, though in their own land, they yet were under a foreign ruler; and how many were there scattered abroad here and there among the nations of the Earth?—all in subjection to the kings and rulers of the Gentiles! All, both in and out of their country were sighing under the iron yoke of bondage, and longed earnestly for freedom and deliverance. The sons of Israel are scattered and dispersed, and deprived of the head that should unite them and join them together into one living body. But the time of the promise is arrived (ver. 17; Gal. iv. 4), and God has provided the holy Head for the scattered children of Israel (Joh. xi. 52). He arms the deliverer and redeemer of the bondman and the captive (Luke iv. 17—21). In profound silence and privacy is this salvation prepared. If the comeliness of Moses was well pleasing to God, one greater than Moses is here. Here is the child who is no sooner born than his birth is celebrated by the Heavenly host. For there is not comeliness of form merely. Here is purity and holiness of spirit. And the Saviour comes not with sceptre or with sword, but in the form of a prophet; as Moses had predicted of him, and such Moses himself had appeared. It is with the manifestation of his person, and with his word, declaring both His nature and His will, that He appears before His people, and, like Moses, awaits in patience to see whether they will receive or reject Him.

The peculiar and the surprising, both in form and appearance, which, in His wisdom, God had prepared for Moses, is also not wanting to the prophet of the new covenant. In his life He does not rigidly follow the observances of the laws and ordinances; but in the joy of the freedom of the Spirit, and in His death, he assumes a form before which all glory and all majesty of earth are as nothing. Whoever, therefore, rejects this form of salvation, prepared and made ready by God, on the plea that it is not the right one, precisely in the same manner as did the Israelites in Egypt, derogates from the absolute majesty of God, who alone is qualified to prescribe laws and orders for His own kingdom. In fact the people of Israel are now on the very point of becoming once more guilty of the same sin, and thereby proving themselves to be the legitimate descendants of that race in Egypt. Once already has the prophet of the new-covenant been rejected by Israel. He now stands once more with His word and spirit before His people, and even once again are they about to refuse and to reject Him.

In the third point of the discourse which had for its subject the history of Israel, Stephen carries his review up to the highest point it ever reached in the Old Testament. As we have already seen, the purpose which, from the very beginning, God had assigned to Israel, was to come into possession of the promised land, and there to worship Jehovah (see vv. 3 and 7). The conquest of this land was commenced under Joshua, and completed by David (ver. 45). This holy worship did not arrive at its permament and perfect form until the building of the temple (ver. 47.) In this period, which was the culminating point for the Old Testament economy, the power and operation of Jehovah is so predominant, that in it the part performed by the people is, in comparison pushed into the back-ground. It is therefore quite consistent with the objective relations of things if, in this portion of his historical survey, Stephen completely overlooks the people and their doings, and dwells only upon the operations of God. This is done here also in such a way as that the absolute and unconditioned freedom and independence of God becomes apparent, and that too in the closest and most intimate relation to a questionable point.

It is to the Temple chiefly that the attention is here directed;

for the mention of the tabernacle in ver. 44 connects this section with the preceding, and the temple built by Solomon is only the more glorious and worthier form of the tabernacle. But precisely in this very matter of the construction of the Sanctuary—in this, the central interest of the completed and definitive period—the absolute independence of Jehovah displays itself. It is plainly declared that the tabernacle, the pattern of the temple, was to be made according to the directions of God, and not according to the conceptions of man—nay, after an heavenly type, and not an earthly model (vv. 44, 45). For it is remarked that David did indeed design to build an appropriate edifice for the Sanctuary; and if he was not permitted to accomplish his intention, and the honour was reserved for his son Solomon, this again is a sign that not even the most praiseworthy intentions and wishes of the elect avail anything in this matter, but that Jehovah is the first and the last to govern and determine everything with regard thereto. Finally, when this height even is reached—when the temple is complete—then must the prophet of God proclaim that even this most magnificent house of God is utterly incapable of comprising the infinite glory of the most High God (vv. 48—50) as indeed before him Solomon himself, when he designed to consecrate the Sanctuary, must fain give utterance to the feeling of the incomprehensible majesty of Jehovah, which not even the earth itself—much less any house built by man's hands, could contain. If Baur is disposed to see in these words a depreciation of the Temple, and an expression of a preference for the Tabernacle (see his Apostel Paulus S. 47) in which he is followed by Zeller (ubi supra p. 77), this is a mere arbitrary conceit, which is opposed by the whole tenor of the discourse, and by the historical position which Stephen had maintained throughout. It must have escaped Baur's memory that long before the times of Stephen (see ver. 48), Solomon had given utterance to the same feeling of the disproportion between the infinity of the Godhead and the narrow limits of any edifice. Now no one assuredly will venture to say that Solomon, at the very moment of the completion of the sublime and majestic work which had been divinely laid upon him, would of himself have spoken disparagingly of it. But, in

fact, there will not appear in his words aught either of disparagment or of censure as long as we retain a firm conviction that even the fullest and completest form of revelation that was ever vouchsafed under the Old Testament adequately corresponded at no time to the true nature of Jehovah. This, indeed, was precisely what the unbelieving and rebellious Jews needed to be taught, at the very time that they vaunted themselves on the inviolability of their holy place, just as if the infinite Majesty of God had taken up his abode in this locality in all his fulness and for ever ; and had thereby belied and changed its whole nature. How greatly must it have tended to make them ashamed of their idolatrous regard for the Temple, when Stephen showed them, how, at every step throughout the whole course of the History of the Old Testament, which sets forth the localising of the Divine presence from the first setting up of the Tabernacle to the building of the Temple, Jehovah had exhibited His own absolute sovereignty, and how He had tied and bound His infinite presence to no earthly object soever.

We have now seen what a rich abundance of striking illustrations of the present state of things, Stephen skilfully contrived to intersperse throughout his speech, which so far has maintained a strictly objective character. There still remains, however, for notice, a circumstance which, as yet, has not met with its due consideration. We have already recognized how important it was, considering the speaker's object, for him to be able to demonstrate the progressive character, both of the revelations and of the operations of Jehovah ; but we have still to determine what it was that Stephen designed to intimate by his so frequent allusions to certain instances of a sort of dualism which are to be found within this progressive development. First of all, let us realize to our minds the following cases. It is impressively observed that it was not at the first, but at the second meeting between Joseph and his brethren, that the gulf which separated them was filled up (ver. 12). Moses, when at the end of the first forty years he shewed himself to the Israelites, was rejected (vv. 23,) 28, but when he appeared again before them at the close of the second period of forty years, he was gladly received (vv. 30, 36). Moses became now the leader of the Jewish people (ver. 35) ; but he was not permitted to do more than to lead

them into the wilderness (ver. 36), it was only under his successor that the entrance into the promised land was effected; Joshua consequently was the second leader of Israel (ver. 45). Moses is the prophet of Israel, but the realisation of the prophetic office was to be looked for in Him alone who should come after him (ver. 37). The tabernacle was the beginning of the Sanctuary of Jehovah, the finishing of it was however the Temple (vv. 44, 47). Joshua commenced the driving out the Canaanites and the taking possession of the land; but it was David that first brought these two works to an end (ver. 45). Lastly, David it was who desired to build a temple to the Lord, but to Solomon was the privilege accorded of carrying out this purpose, 46, 47. In a discourse where the choice is left us either to look upon it as unmeaning and as failing totally of its object, or else to try and discover beneath its objective form, hidden subjective allusions—in a discourse in which we have already succeeded in extracting from the historical envelope the richest abundance and variety of such polemical and apologetic ideas as bore very forcibly on the existing conjuncture—in such a discourse we shall surely not be justified in considering as nothing more than accidental this series of instances of a dualism, in which the second act invariably appears to be the completing and conclusive one. What then is implied therein? At the very outset we found that it was not without its significance if Stephen pointed to this progressive character of the divine revelation as evidently designed by God. We recognized therein a contrast to the arrogant position assumed by the Jews, who dared to set up their own narrow ideas and wishes as rules and conditions for the domain of revelation; who, more especially in the time of the accomplishment, presumed to insist that the external aspect of the manifestation and the fulfilment should forthwith be realized before they would condescend to lend to it their recognition and assent. If, then, in that gradual progression of the Old Testament history, this twofold law presents itself before us as its special condition, ought not this same special law to possess a corresponding force and application for the New Testament era, even as much as the more general one? In fact this law of twofoldness, as applying to the times of the New Testament, has already occurred to us in the distinctest manner possible. In his

second address, Peter speaks clearly and expressly of a twofold mission of Jesus Christ ; and refers the first to an influence upon the inner character, and the second to an effect to be produced on the outer world (see iii. 20, 26). And even this law of the two missions, and of the twofold operation of Jesus Christ, is precisely what the Jews neither could nor would understand. Instead of resting for the time contented with this first mission, and allowing it to work for their internal conversion and sanctification, they obstinately fixed their thoughts on His second mission and that mode of action which was destined to operate on the external world. In justification thereof they might apparently appeal to the revelation contained in the Old Testament, which in its prophetic portions joins together both the missions and both the operations of the Redeemer. However, without entering upon the comparison of Prophecy and its fulfilment, though so obviously suggesting itself, Stephen, in his historical review of the Old Testament, points among other matters also to this finer feature of its development, according to which a preliminary matter, which still remained rather in the sphere of inwardness and mystery, was so often followed by a similar incident which brought about its final realisation.

Now Stephen, quitting his objective exposition, suddenly addresses himself to the Sanhedrim in words of reproach. And in order to explain this circumstance, many commentators have thought it necessary to assume that some sudden outcry or threatening gesture on the part of his auditors occasioned this rapid turn in the discourse. However, we may venture to take it for granted that if this sudden transition had been occasioned by any external cause, and could not be accounted for in any other way, St Luke (to judge from his characteristic accuracy), would not have omitted to notice such an interruption. But in fact the transition is not so abrupt as it appears. In the first place, these concluding words do involve a connection with the historical exposition which precedes them. That which connects the past of which he has been speaking with the present is, namely, the tie of national descent and relationship. Those of whom Stephen had been discoursing were the fathers, and those before whom he stands are the sons : Such as the former had been and shown themselves, such, also, had the latter now in like

manner proved themselves (51 cf. Matt. xxiii. 31—32). But also as regards God Himself, there is likewise in these concluding words a connecting link which unites the present with the past. In the former times God had sent the prophets, in the latter times He has sent the Just One. The one had foretold the coming of that Just One, the other fulfilled those prophecies by His actual coming (ver. 52). Still it cannot be denied that if there were not, besides those already pointed out, yet another connection between these words, thus directly addressed to his hearers, and the historical germ of the discourse, it would not be easy to account for the abruptness and harshness of this address. However, not only does this concluding appeal dovetail backwards into the historical portion, but just as certainly does the historical summary look forward to this appeal and application. For we have already arrived at the conclusion that it was by no means Stephen's object to adduce the principal incidents in the history of Israel simply from an objective point of view, but that he never loses sight of the whole of the present with all its details and relations ;—that, properly speaking, he has no other end in view but to show forth in its true light this his own generation, which chiefly he was concerned with; and that for this purpose he employs the very means, whose authority even his adversaries must acknowledge — the history of Israel. This history was to him a mirror in which he could contemplate and recognize the present, both in its human and divine aspects ; so that when he speaks of Moses, the Prophet and the Saviour of the New Testament is present to his mind ; and when he tells them how, under the Old Covenant, Israel rejected its guide and Redeemer, the present generation and its rejection of Jesus Church are really what he has in his thoughts. But now, if the case really stands thus, then we shall have so little reason to wonder at the abruptness of the transition in ver. 51, that we shall see in this appeal nothing more than a difference of form from what precedes it ; and which can only have been intended to awaken a clearer conviction of the result of all that the history sets forth. One moment only can it hold back our assent, if, inasmuch as in the close of the historical portion, nothing is said of the conduct of the people, this sharp objurgation does not seem to come in very suitably in that place. But we must remember that Stephen himself alludes to the fact that even on the occasion

of the most perfect revelation of God in the Old Testament which was concentrated in the Sanctuary of the Temple, there was an accompanying acknowledgment, in the most expresss terms, of its inadequacy and imperfection. Such, then, being the direction of his thoughts, Stephen could not well help bringing before his mind the stiff-neckedness with which the Israel of his days clave the more zealously to the Temple of wood and stone, the more vehemently they raged against the perfect temple—the body and Church of Christ. From such thoughts it was but a single step to the appellation of σκληροτράχηλοι.

Now, the leading idea of these last words of Stephen is even that which is at once implied in the designation by which he addresses them. Stiff-neckedness as well as uncircumcision of heart is a reproof which Moses and the prophets had already brought against the people of Israel (see Exod. xxxiii. 3; Lev. xxvi. 41.; Jer. ix. 25), if therefore Stephen goes on to say, "ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," this reproof clearly refers to the whole of the past generations of Israel (see Bengel), as indeed after pointing out at the end of ver. 51 and in ver. 52, this connection between the past and the present, Stephen does himself come back to this comprehensive way of speaking in the last proposition of his discourse, and includes the generation of Israel which had stood at Sinai, and that of his own days in the unity of one person (comp. Matt. xxii. 34—36). Consequently in the whole of Israel, from Joseph and Moses even to those of his day, there is but one race. This race had, it is true, from the beginning down to those days, stood continually under the operation of God who rules all things by His free grace and infinite power; nevertheless it had still remained in its natural state; notwithstanding all that had been wrought for Israel by the power and influence of the Holy Spirit, still the ancient obduracy of a rebellious nature—the old impurity of an unsanctified heart—was constantly showing itself. It ill became such a race to appeal and to depend on its own intrinsic merits. For such a people, the first and most urgent of all needs is to change its previous views and to abandon altogether its former ways. And in order to awaken in his hearers this salutary feeling, Stephen, before he concludes, gives another prick to their consciences. He reminds his judges of that law to which they best loved to appeal, with the view of

showing how even it bore testimony against them. "Ye have," he says, "received the law by the disposition of angels" (*εἰς διαταγὰς τῶν ἀγγέλων* (see Meyer on the passage); in the promulgation of the law which was accomplished by the disposition of angels (see Theol. comm. 1, 1,522), there is a plain intimation of the incomplete character of the existing revelation, as well as an allusion to a more perfect one about to be brought to pass by Jehovah Himself, (cf. ver. 30 and 35). But even in the sight of this incomplete revelation Israel had never been justified; *ἐλάβετε*, says St Stephen, *καὶ οὐκ ἐφυλάξατε*. The only one who had answered all the requirements of this law—the only one, in whom the true spiritual character of Israel had been fully realised, is Jesus. And it is therefore that Stephen designates him by a name which peculiarly intimates this fact :—*ὁ δίκαιος* (ver. 52); He, as the personal and human manifestation of the justice of God, is the (promised) more perfect revelation of the Law. What unrighteous blindness is it not, then, to cling to the incomplete and the imperfect, which witnesses against the people, and to reject the more perfect, to which the former pointed, and which alone was able to remove its imperfections.

It is, as is well known, a disputed point, whether Stephen wished to continue his address, but was prevented by the interruption of his hearers, or had really intended to conclude with these last words. When we consider that in all that he has hitherto said he had not gone beyond complaints against Israel, and when we call to mind that on such an occasion Stephen must have felt there was a call on him not only to justify himself but also to bear witness to Jesus Christ, it is difficult to feel convinced that in his discourse Stephen had not proposed to himself the same method as we find St Peter following on more than one occasion; namely, after vividly delineating their former evil ways to point out and to recommend the path to repentance and conversion, to salvation and peace. If, therefore, the Sanhedrim did not hear once more, from the mouth of St Stephen also, this winning voice of the Gospel, it was its own fault; since it could not endure the stern call to repent which the martyr addressed to it. These last words exhausted the measure of their patience, and the rage, which they had so long with difficulty restrained, now found a vent.

No sufficient ground exists for doubting as Baur (ubi. supra. S. 52; 53) and Zeller (ibid S. 82,83) do, the three following details of the death of Stephen: for who can venture to measure or to determine how far the fanaticism of the Jews, deeply wounded as it must have been by the sharp reproaches which Stephen had administered to it, was likely to forget itself and to transgress all the bounds of restraint? But indeed the whole of the proceedings against Stephen had nevertheless an authority in the enactments of the law with regard to false prophets (see Deut. xiii. 6; x. 11; xvii. 7; Lev. xxiv. 16). Stephen for instance was looked upon as one who, by his own speech, wherein he had recklessly assailed the majesty of the Jewish people and its high council, stood convicted as a blasphemer of Jehovah, and a seducer to the worship of strange gods. It does not appear that Bauer and Zeller dare to doubt that a blind rage was sufficient to close the eyes of the Jews against the danger that might probably arise from its exercise; they maintain, however, that such a sudden transition from the patience with which they had listened to Stephen's long justification unto such violence of passion is opposed to all probability. But here it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that the Sanhedrim, desirous as they might be to interrupt Stephen, could not well do so, as long as maintaining the utmost moderation and self-command, he clothed both his defence and attack in the guise of history.

In the same measure as suffering was multiplied on the disciples, the hostility of the Sanhedrim, which in presence of the favour of the people had previously been held in check, has at last reached its height in a blind rage, in which, by a total conversion of sentiments, the multitude now shared (see vi. 12, vii. 57). The bloody scourging (see ver. 40) has now become a stoning to death—so in the present case, where this height of suffering is for the first time undergone, the boundless triumph of the inner victory over the greatest might of the hostility of the world must be displayed in the same degree of unlimited power. It is in this light that we must regard all that is told us of the issue of the first martyrdom in the Church. The more plainly so shameful and so cruel a death of the witness of Jesus appears to imply the cessation of the Heavenly influence of Him who sits on the right hand of God, and the omnipotence of the hostile

violence of earth; so much the more brightly and gloriously does the miraculous agency of Jesus and the nothingness of all the hostile measures of the evil world present themselves at this moment before the inner eye of faith. While Stephen sees that the ungovernable rage of the Sanhedrim is let loose against him, and when we might expect that he would have been overpowered by the perception, he calmly looks up to Heaven and beholds the glory of God and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God (ver. 56). The expression (which is rarely met with out of the Gospels) by which Jesus is here described, reminds us of the original use of this most significant title in Dan. vii. 13, 14, where the Messiah is introduced as the Son of Man, inasmuch as he is the conqueror over the brute force of earth, which constitutes the essence of the powers of this world, and inasmuch as he thereby fulfils, as the perfect Son of Man, the original task which was given to the first man in vain. For, on this occasion also, the powers of this world display themselves as brute-like, since, in reply to the discourse of Stephen, rife as it was throughout with wisdom and with power, they have nothing to offer but rage, and since, to his countenance, lit up with a heavenly radiance (see vi. 15) they could oppose nothing but gnashing of teeth (see vii. 15), and to his helplessness nothing but rude force. If, therefore, at such a crisis, when the brute power of the world was let loose upon Stephen, the privilege was accorded to him of looking into the depths of heaven and beholding there the Son of Man, not, it is true, seated, but standing at the right hand of God, this must have immediately convinced him, that the brutal element should not prevail over him, however sharply he might have to endure its violence in the body, but that the Son of Man had not only entered into possession of His kingdom and power, but was at that moment actually exercising it (comp. Ps. cx. 1, 5, 6). But how did Jesus exercise at this moment that power which overcometh the world, if He permitted his servant and confessor to fall and to perish beneath the stones showered on him by his enemies? Even in the very circumstance that nothing more is told us of Stephen during his sufferings than that he prayed to Jesus, and that in this act of prayer a marvellous triumph over the power of death was triumphantly displayed. While he prays "Lord Jesus receive my Spirit," he cheerfully and calmly gives

up his body to the hostile powers of the world; by means of this voluntary surrender of his body to the world, and by the commending of his Spirit to Jesus in the fulness of faith, he has become entirely free even from himself. And this perfect freedom he shews yet the more, in that he does not at once sink on the earth, but, falling on his knees amidst the shower of stones, he prays for his murderers. Stephen had now done with himself; he had both freely given up his body to the hostile powers of this world, and he had commended his Spirit into the hands of his Lord. There is, however, one thing which lay very near to his heart—not, indeed, the community of Christians, for they, he knew, were under the quickening and protecting care of his Lord and master—but His people, His chosen people Israel, who had always resisted the Holy Spirit, and now was once more staining itself with innocent blood. The last words of the dying martyr are a proof of the unquenchable love with which Stephen clung to his people, and the bright radiance which is reflected on his whole discourse, shews us that within this external form we were right in tracing, as we did, an informing and animating soul. From the entire past and present history of Israel one hope alone remains to comfort Stephen amidst all this corruption, namely, that Jesus is not merely come once for all, but, according to the Old Testament precedent, is to come once again. This, then, is his last supplication and prayer: that the blood-guiltiness through which the Israel of his day identifies itself with the whole of the bloodstained past might be forgiven; that the bann which had hitherto included all of Israel's race under the displeasure of the Almighty, might be removed before the second coming of the Lord. And when he had uttered this prayer "he fell asleep" (ver. 60). This cruel and shameful death at the hands of his fierce foes in the open field, on the hard bier of the murderous stones, is there called a "falling asleep" after a display of that marvellous power with which the Lord from Heaven had supported and strengthened His martyr under the pains of death.

SECOND BOOK.

THE CHURCH

IN ITS PASSAGE FROM

THE JEWS TO THE GENTILES.

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IN ITS PASSAGE FROM

THE JEWS TO THE GENTILES.

§ 13. DIFFUSION OF THE GOSPEL WITHOUT THE APOSTLES.

(Chap. viii. 1—4.)

The stoning of Stephen is an event which marks an epoch. He had exhibited to the people of Israel and also to the Sanhedrim, the undeniable truth, that even up to that very day, Israel had persevered in the same obduracy and impurity of nature which had dwelt in them of old, and that, therefore, they stood in need of a sanctifying new birth. By the utterance of these unpalatable truths, the authorities of the nation were suddenly stimulated to abandon that path of moderation and of waiting for the issue, which Gamaliel had recommended, and they had given way to the most violent animosity against the witness to the truth, in such wise that this very result furnished a complete justification of the charges brought against them by Stephen. But in thus filling up the measure of hatred and of the rejection of the Gospel, the supreme council of the state were not alone; even the people do not appear to have stood aloof in this persecution. It is not expressly asserted, it is true, that the latter did take a part in the stoning of St Stephen,—which, indeed, would have

been only customary on such occasions of public punishment,—yet had they remained firm in the favourable disposition they previously had evinced towards the witnesses to the Gospel truth, the stoning of Stephen would assuredly have never taken place. Besides, it is expressly observed that the occasion for the persecution of Stephen was furnished by a general commotion among the people (see chap. vi. ver. 12.) In the people of Israel, therefore, so far as they were represented by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a change of feeling had taken place, and consequently, as a whole, they cannot be absolved from the curse incurred by the murderous persecution of Stephen. Or was it, perhaps, the result of this sorrowful event, the triumphant testimony to the truth which was given even in the patient submission of the martyr that facilitated and brought about such a change of sentiment? It is easy to suppose that the extreme of wickedness on the one hand, and the might of the Holy Spirit on the other, may have wrought a profoundly exciting sensation upon highly susceptible minds which, as yet, had not come to any decision on the matter. Was not one of the two malefactors moved to believe on the Lord, when on the cross He had been abandoned by all? and after He had suffered, and was dead, Joseph of Arimathea felt for Him as he had never felt before. And, in truth, a trait is here reported to us, which evidently testifies that such was the impression left by the death of Stephen; generally, however, it is altogether overlooked. When in ver. 2 we are told that "devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him;" by these ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς we are certainly not to understand members of the Church, for such, (as Meyer, Kühnöl, and Olshausen, remark,) would asuredly have been described more distinctly, while the epithet εὐλαβεῖς carries us back to chap. ii. ver. 5, and is evidently designed to awaken the idea of piety in the Old Testament sense. Moreover, this view is decidedly supported both by the δὲ of the second, and also by the δὲ of the third verse; for it is only by such a view that we gain an antithesis between these two verses. If in opposition to this view, De Wette advances the position, that it was not only permitted but also commanded, that executed criminals should be buried, he overlooks the fact that the law applied only to such as had been hung (see Deut. xxi. 22, 23; Josh. x. 26,

27); and even though one should allow to it an extended application, still the great lamentation which is here spoken of, must, at all events, be allowed to signify that the burial of Stephen was not performed so much out of respect for the law as out of a personal consideration for him who had been stoned to death. This burial of the martyr by the hands of these "devout men" was a proof of exalted courage in those who did not hesitate to manifest at once the conviction of the truth which had been wrought in their minds, and their detestation of the bloody deed which had been instigated by the Sanhedrim and approved of by the multitude. But significant as is the testimony which this circumstance furnishes, that even then there was not wanting in Israel a profound susceptibility for the truth, nor a possibility for a decided and rapid conversion, so the more sorrowful on the other hand is the sign it gives, how by far the great majority of the people came short of that which was incumbent on them, and which at this moment was more necessary to them than ever. For, as regards the effect of this event on the whole body of the people, it exercised a hardening rather than a converting influence; just as a similar result had followed the death of the Lord himself. While the Gentiles were moved by the startling circumstances which accompanied the passion and death of Jesus, Israel continued to tread step after step along the old path of its perversity, and it is evidently the wish of our informant to make us sensible that such also was the most important and noticeable consequence of the martyrdom of St Stephen. After having previously raised the curtain from the heavenly-illumined sanctuary of this first martyr for the name of Jesus, and after filling every sensitive mind with a reverent joy and awe, he passes on by means of a δὲ—the natural transition—to a something different Σαῦλος δὲ ἦν συνευδοκῶν τῇ ἀναιρέσει αὐτοῦ· (ver. 1). Now this Saul is introduced to us as a young man at whose feet the witnesses had laid down their clothes in order to prepare themselves for their murderous work. Consequently, this youth must have stood in the immediate neighbourhood of Stephen, while he prayed and fell asleep. He had heard, therefore, how this witness to the truth had with loud voice, not, indeed, as he well might, arraigned his malignant countrymen, but recommended

them to the forgiveness and mercy of Jesus; he had seen with his own eyes how he who had been tortured unto death had fallen asleep in peace, on the hard stones and beneath the hands of his murderers. With all his prejudice, with all his obduracy, we might nevertheless reasonably expect some impression to be made on a young mind by such powerful facts. One impression, however, and one alone, is recorded by St Luke; and that too, not one which though only for a moment, did, nevertheless, for the time alarm and warn the conscience, but one even of satisfaction;—yes, the eye of Saul, the young man, dwelt with pleasure on this scene—on this decided proceeding of the supreme authorities of Israel, and on the mortal sufferings of Stephen. The participial form of the expression ἦν συνευδοκῶν is evidently chosen with design, in order the more vividly to describe the permanence of this impression of satisfaction; as indeed Paul himself at a later period has described the state of his feelings at that time with the same words and by the same combination (see xxii. 20). So utterly impenetrable and closed against all testimony to the truth—so thoroughly hardened is the heart of this Israelitish youth. If his had been a solitary instance, then most assuredly Luke would neither have brought it so prominently forward, nor have placed it at the beginning of a new section of his history. But, in fact, this Saul of the tribe of Benjamin (see Philip. iii. 5) is designedly placed before us as a representative of the whole people whom this fresh blood-guiltiness had still more thoroughly hardened—just as the Saul of old, who was of the same tribe of Benjamin, had on a former occasion represented and been the type of the people of Israel. For, if immediately afterwards, we are told: "there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem" (ver. 2), this is without doubt an universal fact, in which the authorities and the people alike took part, and in which that same feeling, which consciously animated Saul, no doubt displayed itself. And the same relation between Saul also, and the whole body of the people, subsequently comes before us. It was natural indeed that the storm which, with the death of Stephen, burst upon the Christian community should not rage uniformly; in Saul, however, this sentiment of hatred against the Christians was a con-

scious feeling; for he, with his own hands, carried on the persecution, and "entering into the houses, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison" (ver. 3).

If we desire to obtain a correct view of the progressive development of the Church, it is not unimportant to form a clear notion of these first persecutions against the Christians. If, after alluding to this great persecution, our narrator immediately goes on to say: "They were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria" (ver. 1) we might be led to conclude that all the confessors of Jesus were driven out of Jerusalem: for that πάντες can signify, as Kühnöl thinks, only many, is justly denied by Meyer; but if, as the latter imagines, the expression is hyperbolical, in that case those that remained could have been only a few. Now, as we know from other sources that Christians—and they, too, by no means insignificant in numbers—still remained in Jerusalem; Schneckenburger (see his Zweck d. Apostelgesch. S. 182, 183) and Zeller (ubi supra S. 372) are at great pains to prove this passage to be a most unhistorical exaggeration which had its source in the petty object "of giving distinct prominence to the animosity of the Jewish nation at large and fundamentally to the Gospel." But it ought to have been considered that the narrator would certainly not have executed such a design so clumsily, as in one and the same clause to assert the direct contrary of what he had intended, and also, only one sentence further on, to make another statement in direct contradiction to what was involved in such an object. For when in the very sentence which speaks of this universal dispersion, the twelve Apostles are excepted, (ver. 1,) this very exception which is made in favour of nothing less than the heads of the community can awaken no other idea than that of a relaxation of the persecution. And if, in a subsequent clause, Saul is spoken of not only as searching for Christians in their own homes, but also as finding them, and dragging them forth, (ver. 3,) the historian himself gives us thereby to understand that the first persecution had by no means driven all the Christians out of Jerusalem. It would almost seem as if the occurrence of these apparently contradictory statements, forces us the more on their account to represent to ourselves the whole state of the question agreeably to that general historical point of

view which our history affords us, and not to judge of these facts by the first and best preconceptions we may chose to form of them.

Above all things, we must guard against transferring into that particular domain, in which our history is now moving, the contrast between Christianity and Judaism such as it actually exists in the present day, slowly and long developed in the modes both of thought and speech. We must, on the contrary, vividly realize to our minds the truth that Christianity, immediately and originally, was nothing less than the fulfilment and completion of Judaism; that those who believed in Jesus, so far from ceasing to be Jews, then only began to be called and to be Jews, in the true and proper sense of the term (see Rev. ii. 9; iii. 9). Consequently it was both natural and necessary that the Apostles and first Christians should simply follow all the rules of life which prevailed among their countrymen. The temple of Israel is also their sanctuary (see ii. 46, v. 12). The hours of prayer for Israel are also their hours of prayer (see iii. 1; ii. 42) cf. Elvers, der nationale Standpunct in Beziehung auf Recht, Staat, u Kirche, S. 259. 261). If, then, among the Christians extraordinary gifts and signs were manifested both in words and works, we must not judge of this fact by the narrow standard of our own public opinion and system; but we must bear in mind that with this people both their public institutions and whole sphere of thought were from the very first adapted to the very object of allowing free and unimpeded development and operation to the wondrous workings of God. Accordingly the Church, as the holy seat of divine wonders and miraculous powers, showed itself first of all as the exclusive realisation of the people of God, and subsequently as an opposition to the law both repugnant to and irreconcilable with public opinion. In short, as long as the people of the Jews collectively had not, with full consciousness, and of set purpose, rejected and repudiated the preaching of the Gospel, and had not, in conformity with this opposition to the Gospel, modified its own opinions and ordinances, Christianity might have adopted the manners and customs of Judaism as its natural guise. If we realize this truth to our minds, the account which Hegesippus gives us of the life and death of St James (Euseb. h. e. ii. 23) will not appear so incredible as it is generally considered;

—though indeed even Credner (see his Enleitung ins N. T. 1. 2, 572, 579, 580) and Rothe (see Anfänge d. Kirche S. 270) have already freed their minds from the general condemnation of it. It was not therefore until the ever deepening obduracy of the Jews had called forth on the part of the Christians the utterance of the threat, that Israel might be rejected, and that the people of God would thenceforth have to live and move in new customs and manners—not until then was the national zeal of the Jews excited universally against Christianity. And this contingency has now occurred. Stephen, roused by a manifestation towards himself of such a degree of obstinacy on the part of the Jews as they never before had shewn, gave utterance to this threat, and he was consequently exposed to the deadly animosity alike of the rulers and of the populace. It was certainly still possible that his opposition to the existing Judaism might be regarded as merely an individual opinion of Stephen, and of those most closely connected with him, while the majority of the Christians, and especially the Apostles, would be acquitted of any such antagonism. But a multitude whose passions have been roused are not generally wont to discriminate very nicely, and, besides, the Sanhedrim had already noticed the same tendency in the Apostles, although as yet it was more concealed. It is, therefore, quite conceivable if the persecution, stimulated by the zeal of Saul, broke out and attacked the whole community, and indeed on the same day (ver. 1). As the Christians were accustomed frequently to assemble together, (see ii. 46), and as every mind must have been occupied with the danger of Stephen, who was revered by the whole Church, it is very probable that an assembly was sitting at the very time that Stephen was stoned. (Comp. xii. 5, 12). Against those who were thus gathered together, a raging persecution now broke loose, and the more so as this meeting together of the Christians was the only external sign that distinguished them from the rest of the Jews who lived in obedience to the law. Even at a later period, when the passionate hostility of the Jews towards the community was somewhat allayed, it was invariably these assemblies of the believing Jews that gave greatest offence, so that the weaker brethren were easily persuaded to abandon the practice, and to content themselves with the general meetings in the temple and

the synagogue. (See Hebr. x. 25. Delitsch über den Hebräerbrief, Rudelbachs Zeitschrift, 1849. S. 277). And if now it is further said : πάντες τε διεσπάρησαν, these words express primarily the most immediate result of this attack on the assembled community : "they were all scattered abroad." It seems as if the persecution which had slacked its hottest thirst in the blood of Stephen, had for the present time no farther definite object, but felt itself satisfied by the simple dispersion of the assembly. If, then, in the same sentence, St Luke adds the words κατὰ τὰς χώρας τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας we look upon this as the second part of what is stated of the effects of the persecution. With good reason did many of the Christians see in the bloody end of Stephen, and in the violent attack on the whole community, the termination on the one hand of public security for the Church in Jerusalem, and on the other the beginning of the universal rejection of the Gospel on the part of the Jews. As long as there still lived a hope of the conversion of Israel, Jerusalem, according to the prophecy of Joel, appeared to be the holy city of refuge from the horrors and sufferings of the last times (see ii. 39). In proportion as this hope died away, the threatening tokens of these times gathered like heavy clouds around the mountain of Jerusalem, so it was that in compliance with the words of the Lord (see Matt. x. 23 ; Luke xxi. 21) and not merely with their own humour this fact became to many the occasion of their quitting Jerusalem. But natural as it was that on the one hand many should have regarded in this light all these circumstances and events, and have taken their measures accordingly, on the other it was no less natural, if others did not feel themselves driven by the isolated facts of a few days to come as yet to the same conclusion. To the latter belonged especially the Apostles. If, therefore, it is added at the end πλὴν τῶν Ἀποστόλων, this limitation must be referred to the second half of the statement. From the Assembly they were all scattered abroad ; evidently the Apostles as well as the rest : but as for the dispersion into the regions of Judea and Samaria; naturally enough there were many among the dispersed who were not driven to those quarters, and especially the Apostles. If we thus adopt the supposition of a pregnant mode of expression, we shall both get rid of the several seeming contra-

dictions of the clause before us, and also keep our ideas of these matters in the very course into which they are carried by the information elsewhere given us.

That a great number of Christians remained in Jerusalem together with the Apostles, is simply a self-evident inference. Now, our previous reflections must have rendered it by no means difficult to understand how it was possible for these Christians to continue in Jerusalem, notwithstanding this commencement of universal hostility and persecution on the part of the Jews. Their animosity could not maintain itself at the height of those few days—and the less so as the hatred of the populace was first excited by the appearance of Stephen personally, who, however, had now been put out of the way. If then the Christians abstained from their usual public assemblies, and from everything calculated to excite especial notice—which assemblies were indeed the only distinctive mark of the Christians that gave offence—they might in all respects have gone their own way perfectly undisturbed. One only among the Jews could not rest for the thought that this sect was actuated by a slumbering opposition to the existing form of Judaism ; and he therefore also leaves the Christians no rest. This is Saul. But as he could not discover any public meetings, he goes about entering into every house where he suspects that Christians are dwelling, and casts them into prison. It was perhaps at this time that, for the purpose of detecting the confession of Jesus under the outward guise of Judaism, he had recourse to the dreadful means which he himself speaks of in xxvi. 11, and compelled the disciples of Christ to blaspheme. As Saul in his persecutions made use of the public prison, we see that the public authorities—as indeed we could not but expect—still persevered in their open hostility to the Christian community. The persecution, however, as yet attacks none but individuals ; and this being the case the community might still continue to exist. Moreover, some remnant of that veneration, with which the Apostles had previously been regarded and treated, might even still survive among the people (see v. 13), and probably some willingly persuaded themselves that these persons, of whose genuine Judaism the people had never doubted, had no participation in the opinions of Stephen. In this way at all events we can well understand how externally it was rendered possible for

the Apostles to continue in Jerusalem even after this change had occurred in the general sentiments of the Jews. But still it does not by any means answer the other question: what was it that determined the Apostles not to quit Jerusalem, when so many others of the Christians dispersed themselves throughout Judea and Samaria? Meyer gives it as his opinion that the Apostles had decided on remaining in Jerusalem, "because, according to the opinions they then entertained, the central point of the old Theocracy had become the centre of the new." But against this explanation it is objected by Zeller (ubi s. S. 371), that according to i. 4, 8, the Apostles had received instructions which sounded quite differently. To us, however, judging from all that has gone before, it is not for one moment doubtful, that the command given them, that beginning at Israel they should go even unto the ends of the world, could not well be understood by the Apostles in any other sense than as implying that this mission into distant lands was not to be carried into effect until Israel had first been converted by their preaching, and so had fulfilled its vocation. But what were they now to do, when Israel obstinately clung to his old and rebellious nature, and had refused to accomplish his destination? That the Apostles did not cleave to Israel as this people, nor to Jerusalem as this place, has indeed become clear to us from the fact, that from the very first they represented all hope of salvation —indeed of all deliverance, from the final distress, for Israel even and for Jerusalem, as depending on the true and internal relation to the name of Jesus. And we inferred, moreover, from this fact, that in so far as the Jewish authorities openly declared their hostility to the preaching in the name of Jesus, the Apostles did not for one moment hesitate to deny their divine authority, and to question their title to a higher justification of their proceedings. Must not their experience in the last instance have brought them to the conclusion, that all hope for Israel and for Jerusalem must be given up, and that they must accordingly pass on to the Samaritans and to the Gentiles with the Gospel? Did not the decision which was come to, in the execution of Stephen, exactly resemble that which was taken in the crucifixion of Christ? Was there not here also a co-operation of the rulers and of the people, and an animosity which had reached its height? And as the Lord himself, after this rejection of His salvation and His person, entirely withdrew His visible presence from His people, will He

not also now in like manner, after the rejection of His Gospel and of His witness, withdraw also His invisible presence from this people and this place (see iii. 26)? In fact, it must assuredly be so. For whereas hitherto the work of conversion has invariably advanced with mighty effects in Jerusalem, from this time forwards we hear so little of any result at all, that it is not even told us whether the "devout men," who carried Stephen to his burial, did or not become members of the Christian community (see v. 2). It is impossible, therefore, that the Apostles could now entertain a hope that Israel and Jerusalem, would by hearkening to the divine counsels and call, furnish a firm organic basis for the whole Church of Christ on earth; but could they therefore look upon their work in Jerusalem as utterly brought to an end? They had once already been taught in the most significant manner possible, that even by its great wickedness towards the Son of Man, Jerusalem had not yet forfeited its great dignity (see 1, 4, 8, 12). It is true that the stoning to death of Stephen was a fearful act of resistance to the Holy Ghost, such as never before had been witnessed (see vii. 50); but that nevertheless even this sin of Israel's was no blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, must have become certain to them, as well from the dying martyr's prayer for them (see vii. 60), as also from the wholesome impression which this event had left on some members at least of the people. Further, it ought to be well considered, that the original ordinance to prepare Israel and Jerusalem for the organic centre of the entire Church of Christ, rested on the whole of the previous history of salvation, and that therefore it could not be abandoned except in obedience to some definite word and work of God. Therefore, even if the Apostles felt constrained to give up the great hope of bringing all Israel to Jesus, and of founding, as the twelve new Patriarchs, now and immediately a new Israel, into which all the Jews were to be admitted; they were yet convinced that it was destined that not even the gates of Hell should prevail against the Church of Christ, and that therefore this community at Jerusalem is, and for ever would be, the abiding initiation and foundation of the eternal community of salvation. Besides, however utterly this hope of the conversion of the whole people might be extinguished; access to individual Israelites was not debarred them. So long, therefore, as they had not received a precise and definite intimation, conduct-

ing them to a different path—such as evidently had not yet been given them—the Apostles would have to recognize it as their vocation to maintain the community at Jerusalem, and to labour among the individual Jews in that city.

In the remark which closes the clause we are considering, that "they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word" (v. 4), we must recognize the final information concerning the change which the opposition of Israel had introduced into the development of the Church. In the first place, we learn from it, that those who by the scattering of the assembly were driven out of Jerusalem (v. 1), were not, as might have been thought, weak and cowardly disciples of Jesus, for in that case they would have remained quiet, and the more so, as they had not received any command to preach the Gospel. Further, we are not told where these persons, thus scattered abroad, preached the Gospel, because it is intended for us to understand that they published it in every place that they came to. And we are also put in mind thereby, that the publication of the glad tidings was no longer bound to a single place, as had hitherto been the case with it, but that from this date begins its going forth into all lands. Moreover, it cannot be without design that in this section the Christian community is for the first time described as ἡ ἐκκλησία ἡ ἐν τοῖς Ἱεροσολύμοις (ver. 1), as an intimation that from this time forward the Church acquires a wider expansion than the Church of the first fruits had hitherto possessed. It is an obvious remark, and one that has often been made, that by this diffusion of the Gospel, the malice of man in the persecution of the Church appears to be defeated. But this victory over human malignity, which is ever crossing the works and counsels of God, does not shine forth in its full light and splendour, until we take into consideration the further fact, that this diffusion of the Gospel was affected without the co-operation of the Apostles. That these persons by whom the Gospel was first published beyond the limits of Jerusalem, possessed no official character, follows both clearly enough from the context itself, and is also admitted even by those who insist beyond measure on the necessity of an official commission (see Löhe Aphorismen, S. 112. Neue Aphorismen. S. 41). But now, it must not be overlooked that this preaching on the part of Christians did not take place at any time and any where, but pre-

cisely at the moment when the Apostles had ceased to preach to the people, and exactly in those regions where the Apostles were originally called to preach.

Now this circumstance throws a perfectly new light on the motives of the Apostles for continuing in Jerusalem. We may perhaps succeed somehow in rendering it conceivable, how it became possible, both from external and internal considerations, for the Apostles to abide in Jerusalem; but still it must ever remain inexplicable, how it ever came to pass that these extraordinary instruments in the hands of the Lord should from henceforwards have been employed on a work of comparatively so subordinate importance for the whole Church, as that which now lay before them in Jerusalem. It does indeed almost appear as if the obstinate resistance of Israel had rendered vain, not only the counsels of God in regard to themselves, but also the very office of the twelve Apostles, which had been ordained and instituted primarily, indeed, for the conversion of Israel; and, secondly, also for the bringing in of the Gentiles into the sacred body of the people of God. There cannot be any hesitation to make this admission without reserve, since in the beginning God willed and created the freedom of man, and thereby so far limited even His own self, as that all the consequences of this liberty were destined to appear as the results of a divinely willed and divinely operating power; if only, on the other hand, we admit, with as little qualification, the principle (which we must strongly insist on), that God Himself is the creator of this freedom of the human will, and therefore remains supreme master of all its actual and influential consequences.

When, for the first time, it was permitted to the powers of this world to threaten the Apostles, all the Churches were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word with boldness (see 4, 31). That which was then a mere sign, became now an historical fact. Now, by the opposition of Israel, the Apostles are compelled to devote and to waste their divine powers on an unfruitful stony ground; but this limitation of the Apostolical labours serves only to allow another power of the Church of Christ to manifest itself. The hunted and persecuted Christians enter upon the work and office of the Apostles: no one had called them; no one had instituted them; no one had given them their commission; and yet

they nevertheless preach the word while the Apostles are silent; they nevertheless boldly proclaim with their mouths the testimony of Jesus, although they had witnessed the bloody consequences of so doing, in the death of Stephen. What is it then that renders the simple member of the community at Jerusalem capable of such high dignity? It is the Spirit with which all the Christians had been anointed and filled. He it is who supplies to them whatever was deficient in them as regarded human ordinances; He it is who furnishes them with a power and might that overcomes all human weakness. Thus, then, the Apostolate may appear weak, if only the Lord in Heaven, whose might is made strong in the weak, is glorified; thus may official dignity retire into the background, if only the Spirit, from whose holy breath all have life, manifests Himself in His illimitable freedom and omnipotence.

§ 14. PHILIP THE DEACON IN SAMARIA.

(Chap. viii. 5—24.)

The preceding section, in a few short traits, has set before us, on the one hand, the growing hostility to the community in Jerusalem; and, on the other, the beginning of the diffusion of the Gospel beyond and out of Jerusalem. That we have only done what is just and right in recognizing, in these brief sentences, the distinct intimations of the occurrence of a change in the history of the Church, is to our mind confirmed by the section now before us. But now, the point to which all these allusions tended, was found to be this, that the first diffusion of the Gospel took place without the assistance of the Apostles. And even this, which in the preceding section was only generally asserted, is in the present one circumstantially set before us by a striking example. While formerly it was merely said, that those who were scattered abroad preached the Gospel wherever they came, here Philip the deacon is set before us as an instance of such preaching. The fact that this Philip has been regarded, both by some ancient and some modern divines, to be Philip the Apostle (see Zeller ubi. s. S. 373, 374), can only serve to call our attention to the circumstance, that a something is here ascribed to him which is usually

looked upon as exclusively pertaining to the Apostolic office. For since it has already been expressly asserted that the Apostles remained in Jerusalem (ver. 1), and since also in the present section the Apostles are spoken of as being in Jerusalem (ver. 14), the name of Philip, although it is without any further designation, cannot possibly be understood of the Apostle, but must belong to him who is named second among the deacons (see vi. 5), as also in xxi. 8 he is expressly mentioned as one of the seven. The mention, moreover, of this preaching of Philip, the deacon, follows immediately and after the general account of those who had been scattered abroad.

That Philip should be among those who were scattered abroad from Jerusalem, is the less to be wondered at, as he belonged to the deacons, against whom, as Meyer with good reason thinks it probable, the persecution, on Stephen's account, was chiefly and mainly directed. It is true that Philip is not a simple member of the community; he is an eminent member of it, and in fact intrusted with an office; but, in regard to the preaching of the Gospel, he, like all the rest, stands indeed outside of the limits which had hitherto been observed (ver. 4). For originally the office of the deacons was the very opposite to that of preaching (see vi. 2). But as it had happened to Stephen, that according to the requirement of the circumstances in which he was placed he was furnished with apostolical words and works, so it befalls also in Philip's case. For even though in xxi. 8 he is called an Evangelist, still even Löhe (Aphorismen S. 45) does not venture to refer this designation and this direction of his labours to any commission emanating from the Apostles. But besides the immediate context, there is, however, yet another circumstance which rivets our attention on the importance which accrues to the general body of the community in consequence of the extraordinary labours of Philip. Not only had the seven deacons been chosen out of the community, but it was the community itself that had recognized their qualifications, and elected them. It has appeared to us significant that the first person who had been promoted to an elevated grade of activity by the first conscious interference of the community in the development of the Church had advanced that development itself a considerable step forwards. It was the community that appointed Stephen, and Stephen had evoked the

crisis in the position of Israel towards the Church. At this time the Apostles are sitting still in Jerusalem, and the community is carrying the word of the Gospel forth into the world. Therefore as soon as the first of those who had been brought forward by the choice of the whole body had fulfilled his high vocation, we see the second of them entrusted with the function committed to the community of effecting this transmission of the Gospel from Jerusalem into the world at large.

The bridge between Jerusalem and the world was furnished by Samaria, as has already been hinted (see i. 8). Philip betakes himself to one of the towns of Samaria. It is quite natural for him to avail himself of whatever was here presented favourable to his object—the belief namely in the Restorer (הַתָּהֵב see Lücke Commentar z. Evangel Johannis 1. 596). The preaching of Philip, which as well as that of the Apostles, was accompanied by signs and wonders, had an extraordinary effect, so that we are reminded of the first conversions in Jerusalem. For there does not appear any sign of opposition. The beginning is that the whole people with one accord gave heed to what was said (ver. 6), and the end was the baptism both of men and women. (ver. 12). But the circumstance in which this unanimity of the whole people especially manifests itself, is the accession of Simon Magus to the faith. For he was the personage whose authority was highest in this city, "for they all gave heed unto him from the least unto the greatest." He also believed and was baptized, and continued with Philip, (ver. 13), evidently because he saw that all turned to him. Here therefore is a conversion which pervades every rank of the people, and ultimately reaches even the supreme authority in the town, whereas the effect of the preaching of the Gospel in Jerusalem did indeed influence many thousands, but in the chief authorities and magistrates it met with unceasing opposition; and at most, at the highest point of its impressiveness, it won over to the faith a small number of persons of the priestly class (see vi. 7). Is not this fact a manifestation of what Christ says: that when the kingdom of God shall be taken from Israel and given to the Gentiles, the latter would gladly receive it (see Matt. xxi. 43)? For the Samaritans, even though they inclined to Judaism, and had even adopted the belief in Him who was to restore all things, nevertheless were and still continued Heathens

(see Hengstenberg, Beiträge zur Einleitung in d. A. T. S. 4—28). Moreover, the narrative before us places us in the very midst of the heathen mode of thinking and speaking. What Simon gave out was that he was "some great one" (ver. 9); his teaching therefore, whatever it was, had reference to his own person. Now as he endeavoured to comfirm his doctrine by the practice of magic arts, we see that his object was to gain credit for the possession of divine powers and influence. It is therefore no wonder if his followers and worshippers believed and said of him: "This man is the great power of God" (ver. 10). Although we do not, with Zeller, hold it necessary to see in this sentence an allusion to the sun-god, Baal, Melchart (see ubi supra. S. 380), still we cannot fail to recognize the fact, that not only the attempt of Simon, but especially the belief of his worshippers, is deeply stamped with the characteristic impress of heathen modes of view. As heathendom nowhere and at no time was able to effect a separation between the Deity and the world, between God and man, the idea of the incarnation is perpetually recurring; with it, however, it has neither worth nor truth, even because it is but a compromise between opposites, of which the full truth and reality had never as yet been recognized and felt. With Israel the distinction between Heaven and earth, the holy and the sinful, God and man, is an indestructible and fundamental idea; consequently among them the idea of an incarnation of the Godhead in a human person was received by those only who in their own selves had experienced the moral need of a personal union between God and man. At the very time therefore that Philip is driven out of Jerusalem, because he believed in One who is man and yet a partaker of the Divine nature and omnipotence, the whole city of the Samaritans is hanging in reliance on Simon the Magian, because, as it believes, the great power of God is present in him. But even this form of heathendom breaks at once into pieces before the preaching and miracles of Philip, so that it can no longer afford either stay or attraction.

This rapid and complete triumph of Christianity over heathenism in Samaria is certainly to be regarded as a sign of the greater disposition to receive the Gospel, which at this time existed

among the Gentiles. Moreover, when we follow the narrative before us a little further, we shall become conscious of yet another fact. For in the further course of it, it appears that although Simon believed and had been baptized and continued in the company of Philip, yet this seducer of the Samaritans had received from the Gospel none but a wholly superficial impression. It is true that Peter discovered in him bitterness and iniquity (see ver. 22, 23), but with all this allowance must, in his case, be made for the want of a right understanding, for otherwise he must have known that his offer to purchase the gifts of God for money could only grieve the Apostles. An evil will was no doubt co-operating therewith, inasmuch as Simon must necessarily have resisted the Spirit of God, (Whose sanctifying influence on others he must have been aware of, and Who also had accompanied the preaching with an influence on his own heart,) if he still continued in such darkness as we here find him with regard to the receiving of the Holy Ghost (see ver. 19). And the same character of superficiality and indecision still seems to have remained by him, even after Peter with such earnest and moving words had called on him to awake out of his deep sleep of perversity and ignorance. For, instead of seriously examining himself and seeking to work out his salvation with fear and trembling, or else rejecting from henceforth the earnest and sacred call of the Gospel, he does neither the one nor the other, but in a certain sense does both at the same time. Trustfully he betakes himself to Peter and those who followed him, and begs their prayers for himself, and herein therefore he still continues his inclination for the Gospel. But, inasmuch as he says nothing which intimates that he himself would join in these prayers, and speaks only of the averting of that judgment and suffering, which the Apostle had proclaimed in this place as well as in Jerusalem, (see 2, 19—21), he obstinately continues, as Bengel, Olshausen, and Neander, rightly conclude, in his former outwardness of profession. It is a dangerous combination of the flesh and of the spirit which is here brought before us, and if after times are very full of statements as to the impurity which came into the Church through the subsequent doings of Simon Magus, we plainly have the beginning and the introduction of it here;

and there evidently is more truth than we are usually ready to admit, in the view taken by the ancient Church, of the person and character of Simon Magus.

How different from this is the relation which is assumed by Judaism in its resistance to the Gospel! Here a consciousness of the difference is at once awakened, and measures are taken rapidly and decidedly; the people is soon induced as a body to reject the preaching of the Gospel, and to hate and to persecute unto death the bearers of its glad tidings. Or if, as in the case of Simon, the Gospel is received without the corresponding change having taken place within the man, the secret opposition to the spirit of the Gospel is here developed slowly but distinctly, so that the measure of iniquity becomes full, and the casting out of the evil may be effected, as we have seen in the instances of a Judas Iscariot, and of Ananias and Sapphira. Accordingly, the triumph of the Gospel over heathendom is easier than over Judaism, but still it is a doubtful victory. Gentilism is able to oppose to Christianity less of stability or force than Judaism. The former had nothing to appeal to that had not its origin and source in nature: its most glorious works and services to the human race rest on the powers of creation; as soon therefore as in presence of those works of nature, the works of grace manifest themselves in operation, they cannot maintain themselves—they all, without exception, lose their hold on the consciences of men. Quite otherwise is it with Israel. To them the spirit of grace had throughout revealed itself working in the works of nature. The law of Israel is a word of God, and its kingdom is founded on a divine institution; its people had been consecrated by the fulness of the glory of Jehovah: and its priesthood had the privilege of offering sacrifice to the God of Heaven. In Israel the resistance to the Gospel stayed itself on all these things as upon so many supports that could never be shaken. No doubt it is undeniable that all of them, as soon as they stand in the presence of the Gospel, are nothing but shadows; but what we have here is not the only instance of man going after and pursuing the shadow, in order to get rid of the substance and the reality. As soon as the Gospel has begun to display its might and glory, not one of the general spiritual influences of heathendom was able to maintain its position before it; so also the internal

opposition to it, which no longer finds a holding point in public opinion, puts itself under the form of the Gospel, without however being conquered and entirely overcome by it. And the necessary consequence of this is, that sooner or later it must again come to the light and make itself felt. And here lies the germ of a profound and general corruption in the Gentile Church, which it will not be found so easy to get rid of, as in the Church of Jerusalem; because, while in the latter it had its source in individual character, in the former, it was national.

Hitherto we have not taken into consideration a circumstance in the present section, which, however, by the way in which it is narrated, is presented as important, and which deserves our attention the more, as in more than one respect it does not seem to be in harmony with our view of the matter. What we allude to is, the remark that the Samaritans who were baptized by Philip, were simply baptized in the name of Jesus, without receiving at the same time the Holy Ghost, and that this communication of the Spirit, followed, as a supplementary act, by the imposition of the hands of the Apostles Peter and John (see vv. 15—17). Now from this, it does altogether look as if a fatal shock were thereby given to our view of the first diffusion of the Gospel without the co-operation of the Apostles. For of what avail are all the labours of Philip in Samaria, without the communication of the Holy Ghost? But now, if this did not take place except by the prayer of the Apostles and the laying on of their hands, why, in that case, properly speaking, it is even the Apostles who spread the Gospel, and not others who enter upon their work and office. So far would Philip be from entering upon the work and office of the Apostles, in what we here read of his doing, that in reality the work and office of the Apostles commences exactly at the point where the work of Philip leaves off. However, before we enter more particularly into the examination of this seeming objection, we must first of all accurately determine what properly it is that is here recounted; and in this way we shall perceive that it is not only this representation of ours concerning the nature of Philip's labours, but that other and admitted doctrines also meet a difficulty here. Neander takes great pains to prove that the want, which is here in question, had its source in the subjective character of the Samaritans (see his History of the Planting of the Church,

i. 80, 81). He thinks that the whole preaching of Christ had hitherto continued to be with them a perfectly external thing, and it was the Apostles who first were able to awaken in them the state of mind proper for the right reception of the full inspiration of Christianity. In this view of Neander's, to which Meyer has given his adhesion, there is one right principle; viz. that the imparting of the Holy Ghost, which is consummated by prayer and the laying on of hands, must be looked upon as having reference exclusively to the inner personality of a man, and not as purely manifesting itself in external operations and signs. Löhe says, the ordinary gift of the Holy Gift was received by the Samaritans in and through holy baptism which Philip the Deacon ministered to them, and indeed, as is self-evident, in such wise that there was nothing to be completed, not even by the hands of the Apostles (see Aphorismen S. 29, 30). Whence does Löhe know this? He gives us to understand that he infers it from the fact of baptism. However, it assuredly is conceivable, that even though the accompaniment of baptism by the gift of the Holy Ghost is unquestionably the divine rule; yet in a special case particular circumstances may occur by which this connection, however founded on the ordinary law, may appear to be interrupted for a time. It is certainly true, and also an admitted fact, that that communication of the Spirit, which is here in question, must have been outwardly discernible, since Simon, who regards the matter only from an external point of view, had been cognizant of it, and is evidently anxious for the possession of this power of imparting the Spirit, only because it produces certain external results. This fact, that the gift of the Spirit was externally perceptible, leads us quite naturally to the extraordinary gifts of the speaking with tongues and other miraculous powers, which were at that time associated with the communication of the Spirit. Since we are in the present day accustomed to distinguish these extraordinary gifts from that ordinary operation, which is associated with baptism; it is certainly an obvious course, to distinguish the two in the present instance also, and to suppose that the ordinary result was effected at once, while the extraordinary followed afterwards as the consequence of the imposition of hands. Nevertheless, on the one hand, we are not justified in supposing such a separation for these concrete cases; for it is nothing less than the characteristic

feature of this initiatory period, that the ordinary powers and operations which rest on a cause, the very opposite of all natural causes, are manifested in extraordinary phenomena, so that what in later times we have undoubtedly to keep carefully distinct in our consideration, in this period appear as yet invariably associated together. And on the other hand, the expression in ver. 16 is too universally negative to allow us to suppose that the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost in the baptized was really operating; they could not possibly in that case have been described as baptized merely in the name of Jesus Christ. We are thus then brought back to Neander's view, with regard to the effect of the baptism of the Samaritans.

But ought we then to adopt the opinion which Neander has expressed on the whole internal state of the Samaritans? Evidently Neander's object, in his endeavours to establish this point, is to be able to ascribe the source of the alteration in the Samaritans not so much to the change in the persons who operated on them as rather to the change of the mental states existing within them. In his idea the evangelical influence which worked in them was in its essence permanently identical, before which the operating person comes into consideration only as an instrument. This influence was begun by Philip and carried on by the Apostles. During the course of the operation of Philip the Samaritans did not advance beyond the point of the external reception of the Gospel preached unto them; and it is not until the Apostles carry on the labours of Philip that this outwardness in the Samaritans is overpassed. And, according to that view, it was upon prayer and imposition of hands by the Apostles that the Holy Ghost was imparted to the Samaritans. One cannot find fault with Zeller when he asserts (ubi. s. S. 377) that in this way of understanding the statement before us he cannot recognize the text of the narrative so much as an apologetic theory of Neander's. For, in fact, nothing is there said of any defective reception of the Gospel on the part of the Samaritans; on the contrary, all that is stated leads us to the very opposite conclusion. Thus, in ver. 6 we are told of the people "giving heed with one accord unto those things which Philip spake;" and in ver. 8, that there was great joy in that city;" and in ver. 12, that the Samaritans believed and were in consequence baptized; and in ver. 14, that the report was

carried to Jerusalem that Samaria had received the word of God." This last expression especially is perfectly decisive, since it is the very phrase which our author elsewhere employs of conversion to the Gospel in the most unquestionable instances (see xi. 1 ; xvii. 11). It is quite clear that, whatever is universally requisite in a subjective point of view for the reception of the Gospel, is here predicated of the Samaritans, so that evidently one cannot but feel that if anything is still deficient, the cause thereof must be sought in some other quarter than in the Samaritans themselves. Now in correspondence herewith is all that is narrated on the one hand of the doings of Philip, and on the other hand of those of the Apostles. For to Philip we find ascribed, whatever was efficient for the preaching of the Gospel in the first ages of the Church : He preaches Christ (ver. 5) ; he speaks fully and at length (ver 6) ; he "preaches the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (ver. 12) ; he heals the paralytic and the lame : he casts out the unclean spirits crying with a loud voice (see v. 7—13) ; lastly he baptizes both men and women in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (vv. 12, 13, 16). If, therefore, anything is still wanting, the cause of the defect cannot lie in the doings and operations of Philip, but merely in his personality. And this is also confirmed by all that we are told of the Apostles. So far from continuing further the operations of Philip, they, on the contrary, do nothing more than pray for the baptized and lay their hands on them (vv. 15, 17). By means of these two actions of the Apostles the Samaritans receive the Holy Ghost. Now that Philip had not himself prayed for them is scarcely conceivable ; but his prayer had not the efficacy that the prayer of the Apostles had. And while by means of prayer the relation of the latter to God is exhibited as more intimate and more influential, so also it is by the imposition of hands that they are represented as making others partakers of the fulness of the Spirit. According to all this then there can be no question that the distinction between the Apostles and the Deacon, in working for the kingdom of God, is intended to be set forth in this incident ; therefore all the pains as well those of the Deacon as those of the Samaritans themselves are represented as being in vain so far as what is really the essential matter is concerned ; while, on

the other hand, the prayer and imposition of the Apostles' hands can alone effectuate and bring about the real end.

But here, however, the difficulty which presented itself at the outset meets us anew with redoubled force : — that, namely, this fact overthrows again all that we had advanced with regard to the continuance of the Apostles in Jerusalem, and to the diffusion of the Gospel without their co-operation. It cannot be denied that when we consider the present paragraph alone by itself, we do not see any ready means by which to escape the force of this consequence. We are, however, in this fortunate position that we are directly compelled to leave and to take this section precisely in that connection in which the writer of the work before us has himself placed it. Accordingly we say : there exists no reason why we should give up again and abandon the conclusion which we have inferred from the previous statements of our history, and which we have with due consideration propounded. Preliminarily, therefore, we stand to these results, and ask : is there no point of view from which it is possible to discover and to establish a connection between this incident in Samaria, and the conclusion that we had arrived at in the foregoing section ? As we are totally unconscious of having put any force upon the preceding narrative, either by tacit omission or intentional addition, to answer, therefore, this question is a necessary task laid upon us by the author himself of the Acts. If, then, we succeed in pointing out any such a point of view from which to consider the paragraph before us, we shall not hesitate to assert that it was from this and no other point of view that the historian himself communicated to us the narrative of the conversion of the Samaritans.

It is necessary to realise to our minds a danger which at this time threatened the Church of these days upon the occurrence of this crisis in its affairs, a danger, too, which at all times menaces ourselves also—when we try to conceive of the course of the Church in that period exactly as it really proceeded. We shall be best able to make this danger clear if we set out from the notion usually entertained of the office of the Apostles. As we know that the Apostles were called and prepared by the Lord himself as His instruments for the diffusion of the Gospel, we

must accordingly look upon all the essential advances of the Church in its first period as dependent on their influence and labour. We should therefore have to fear lest the Lord must be charged with having made an ill-choice in His Apostles. And this was evidently what was meant by the ancient designation of the book before us, implying the conviction that the history of this first period of the Church must be looked upon as the Acts of the Apostles. For most assuredly this view cannot have arisen out of the book itself, since the greater portion of it tells us nothing at all of the original Apostles. Journies and acts have indeed been arbitrarily supposed and ascribed to the Apostles in the work of converting the world, and the attempt has been thereby made to supply the deficiencies of this book; and this is done by most people even to the present day. How great an injury is thereby done to our book, is little considered; for although it does not give itself out to be the "Acts of the Apostles," it has, nevertheless, as we have already seen, an universal object. For in that case it must be looked upon as a great defect in its composition to pass over in total silence such important matters as the whole of the later labours of Peter and John, and the whole of those of the great majority of the Apostles from the very beginning. It is easy to suppose that it is much more likely for Luke to have made omissions in his history than that the Lord in Heaven should have committed an error in the government of His own kingdom. But it is not by any means sufficient to assert that Luke has for this or that reason omitted certain essential matters which belonged to the province of his history; for his narrative is in perfect contradiction to these notions of an unbroken, energetic action on the part of all the Apostles in the development of the first period of the Church. For Luke expressly tells us that the Apostles remained in Jerusalem at the very time when the Gospel began to be spread out of and beyond the walls of that city (see viii. 1—4). From this date there occurs, according to the report of our historian, a total cessation in Jerusalem of any external influence of the Gospel while its diffusion advances in other quarters. But even at the very time when this state of affairs has assumed a great and a marked prominence, the Apostles steadily remain in Jerusalem, and do not put themselves in communion with these other

points of the wider diffusion of the Gospel influence, but on the contrary the leading operation in this missionary domain is yielded up entirely to another. In short, the work before us does not leave us at all free room for the arbitrary setting up of such notions of any advancing, universal labours of the Apostles. But now as we are forced by the book itself to abandon these our own conceptions, and to adjust our own ideas to the reality which is very different, we can understand also the danger of a false judgment to which the Apostolate is exposed. For on seeing the Apostles continuing still in that place where the movement had come to a stop while others were labouring there, where the Gospel had entered on a new and grand career, might not the thought possibly arise that the Apostolate, together with the whole of the first beginnings in Jerusalem, was but a subordinate and imperfect stage which was outrun and surpassed by a wider and freer operation of the Spirit? Indeed we need not long speculate on the possibility of such an idea, for its reality stands before our eyes. In our days, indeed, a whole school has so interpreted this first period of the Church as to maintain that this earliest form of Christianity, still lying in the bonds of Judaism and under the guidance of the Apostles, only began to take the shape of a religion of the Gentiles, under the spontaneous commencements of a Stephen and a Paul. Similar phenomena are elsewhere to be met with in the history of the kingdom of God! For instance, the Apostolate thus pushed away into the background, stands not there alone. Where is the whole of the long rich past of the people of Israel? is not the whole present and reality of the sacred history of Israel pushed away into the dark background of the holy writings of the Old Testament? Where does the early corporeal presence of the Lord still continue? is it not sunk down into the mysterious ground of the Sacrament? In truth, the root sinks into the hidden soil of the earth, and it is by so doing alone that the tree, grows, is green, blossoms, and yields its increase. But how rare to be met with is the eye which looks to the invisible! To how many a misconception has the holy past of Israel been exposed! Not to speak of Schleiermacher, who had the presumption to deny all essential connection between the Old and the New Testament; how little of earnestness the theology of every age almost of the Church,

has shown in its view of the history of Israel, is clearly indicated by the fact that, hitherto no place has been found for the future of Israel. And the unprejudiced theologians of our days are not unconscious how very far the earthly and corporeal state and history of the Lord, now that He has withdrawn into the depths of Heaven, and has become "that Spirit" (see 2 Cor. iii. 17), is from being appreciated in all the importance which the Gospels claim for it. Now, it is against the danger of such a misapprehension of the Apostolate upon its retiring into the background, that the narrative of the events in Samaria is actually intended to guard. Even at that time the idea might well arise that by this preaching of those who were spread abroad by this dispersion—by these labours of Philip, and their great results among the Samaritan heathens, a new development of the Church and its extension in the world took place totally unconnected with and dissevered from its first beginning—from the pillars of its primary building. On this account, the Apostles came forth from their resting place, and came into Samaria where the first essay of this new development for the future had shaped itself, in order that by their prayer and Apostolical imposition of hands they might communicate that spirit which they themselves had received on the day of Pentecost. This is the divine seal on the unity and connection between the first commencement,—the divine eternal Apostolate, and every new development, and all futurity. In a word: that which the two Apostles did and performed in Samaria had the nature of a sign. This is the explanation of it. It is exactly on this account that all therein is extraordinary, and every view which would seek to discover here an ordinary proceeding and rule is quickly refuted by and of itself. This is Neander's fault, as we have seen: this is the fault on which Löhe also stumbles; for the very fact that in this case baptism is first made effectual by the prayer of the Apostles, and the laying on of their hands, was even intended to be a sign, and therefore there must have been something about it inconsistent with the ordinary rule. Naturally, therefore, there can be no room here to talk of an Apostolic faculty to impart the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit which Löhe thinks he can discern in this incident, (see Aphorismen. S. 29, 30), and, indeed, still less of a custom belonging to the Apostolical age to make baptism effec-

tual by the laying on of hands, as Olshausen inconsiderately maintains. As soon as we begin to regard the co-operation of the Apostles on the occasion of the first introduction of the Gospel into the heathen world as a sign, and not as any historical element of importance, we are again, so far as concerns the section we have been considering, at harmony with the foregoing one, and are also able without any let or hindrance to pass on to the succeeding paragraph.

§ 15. PHILIP THE DEACON BAPTIZES THE CHAMBERLAIN FROM ETHIOPIA.

(Chap. viii. 25—40).

That we are right in seeing in all that the Apostles did in Samaria a sign, and not, as might be supposed, the beginning of a new series of labours, may be also deduced from the introduction to the section now to be considered. For the narrative, before proceeding any further, conducts the Apostles back to Jerusalem. It does, it is true, remark that they bore witness to the word of the Lord in the Samaritan town where Philip had laboured, and also preached the Gospel in many other villages of Samaria; but in order to prevent our taking up the notion that they saw in these labours among the Samaritans their own proper vocation, we are previously told that they returned to Jerusalem. And, moreover, the narrative does not even hold it to be worth the while to tell us what were the results of this preaching of the Apostles among the Samaritans and elsewhere. But perhaps, then, the labours of the Apostles in Jerusalem are reported! Nothing less: the history henceforth is totally silent as regards the Apostles in Jerusalem, while on the other hand it introduces us into the ulterior labours of Philip the Deacon. And this is distinctly a further sign that the true progress of the history is no longer to be looked for within Jerusalem but without it, and that the work of diffusing the Gospel makes its advances no longer under the hands of the Apostles, but under those of others.

The first work with which Philip the Deacon commenced the Apostolical task of diffusing the Gospel, was connected with

the immediate neighbourhood—the country of Samaria, whither he had been driven from Jerusalem. But in the very beginning the route had been then laid down for the Apostles: "from Jerusalem through Judea and Samaria unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (see i. 8). That however it was not the Apostles, but others in their stead, that traversed this route is anew confirmed to us in the history before us, for while the Apostles return to Jerusalem, the same Philip that had won over the Samaritan town to the Gospel is charged with the commission of carrying the Gospel to a man "of the most remote and distant land, who may therefore well pass for a representative of the ends of the earth." To this work of preaching the Gospel in Samaria Philip was impelled by the Spirit which operated in him, as well as in all those that were scattered abroad, (see ver. 4), while to this special work, which lay moreover out of his immediate sphere of vision, he was expressly called by the Angel of the Lord (ver. 26). He is instructed "to go toward the South unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza which is desert." That it is here implied, as Zeller assumes, (ubi supra S. 385,) that Philip had gone back to Jerusalem before the Apostles, is not to my mind at all apparent. For it is impossible to see why such a command should not have been given to Philip in this favoured spot of Samaria as well as in Jerusalem: for as to the time which it would necessarily take Philip to arrive at the road which led from Jerusalem to Gaza that is a matter of perfect indifference; further, there is nothing determinately laid down for him beyond the direction southwards which applies to Jerusalem with regard to the whole of Samaria. Moreover, everything is against this assumption of Zeller's, for, as we here see on all sides, the course of Philip and that of the Apostles are totally divergent. But now, as there were many roads besides from Jerusalem to Gaza (see Robinson, Palestine vol. ii.) we shall find reason for coinciding with Von Raumer and insisting that the one which had the southerly direction must be here meant; for manifestly the words lead us to think of the road as the continuation of the direction southwards. "In any case it must be maintained that if there was such a road, this must be the one that was intended, and not one which went westwards, if at least the angel's instructions to Philip are to be

looked upon as sufficient." Now that from Jerusalem a road did go directly southwards to Gaza—namely over Mount Hebron, has been well shown by Von Raumer (see Palästina S. 411, 412 Anm. 3). That the chariot of the Chamberlain constitutes no difficulty against this hypothesis, as Robinson thinks, (see vol. i.) every one must be convinced after reading Von Raumer's remarks. This, then, is the road that is meant. Now it is described as ἔρημος. There certainly does exist the possibility of applying the epithet ἔρημος to Gaza. Generally it is thought enough, in order to refute this interpretation, to remind us of the fact that, at the date, when the event which we are considering happened, Gaza had not yet been devastated (see Robinson ii. 643). Hug, indeed, looks upon these words as a note of Luke's, and remarks that, as Gaza was destroyed before the siege of Jerusalem, the chronological possibility of such a note cannot be called in question (see Einleit. in das. N. T. i. 23, cf also Tholuck. Glaubwürdigkeit S. 381). But against this explanation Wieseler has with good reason objected, that such an observation on St Luke's part would be altogether thrown away, and useless, inasmuch as the state of the city of Gaza could have no bearing at all on any point of the history (see Chronolog. des. apostol. Zeitalt. S. 401). It is true that Von Raumer does call attention to a bearing which such a remark concerning the city might have upon the narrative before us, by referring to Zephaniah ii. 4, and to Jerem. xlvii. 5 (see Palästina S. 174). One might assuredly assume that by thus alluding to the threatened destruction of Gaza by the prophet, Luke wished to call attention to the last times, and the times of the conversion of the Gentiles, whose representative the Chamberlain may here be regarded. But on the one hand Gaza holds only a very accidental significance in the incident, and on the other the whole description would, by such an interpretation, be rendered quite lame, inasmuch as it was not until Luke wrote, and not when Philip baptized the Ethiopian, that Gaza could be described as desert. Accordingly, Wieseler's observation in reply to Hug is justified, and we come back again to the usual combination of ἔρημος with ὁδός, in which case we have, moreover, no cause at all to ascribe this designation of the way to any other than to him who commanded Philip to go on this journey. On this supposition, however, we shall

necessarily feel that by this description something must have been intimated, which had a bearing on the following event. Wieseler says: The connexion in which Luke introduces the solitariness of the road is meant to explain how it was that the Chamberlain could read Isaiah—nay, read it aloud—without interruption" (vide supra). As, however, the angel's duty is to deliver a message to Philip, we cannot so well refer this description to that which the Ethiopian was doing, as to that which Philip had to do with regard to this person. Now by the road being described to Philip as lonely and deserted, it is thereby at once intimated that it was a suitable spot where the work of the Gospel might be carried on—where the traveller might be instructed and baptized —without interruption. But, according to this, we must suppose that the exact spot of these labours of Philip is to be looked for somewhere on that portion of the road, on account of which the whole is spoken of as desolate, *i.e.* merely on the reach between Hebron and Gaza. For this reason we cannot agree with the old tradition and with Von Raumer (ubi. supra S. 412) in supposing that the baptism of the Chamberlain took place near Bethsaida on the bustling and well-frequented line of road between Jerusalem and Hebron, but we feel forced to place it on the lower stage beyond Hebron.

Following the divine instructions, Philip betakes himself to the road the angel had pointed out, and follows it in a southward direction until a further command is given him (ver. 27). Now this new command has reference to the appearance of a stranger and traveller who was proceeding along the same road. And immediately this traveller is accuratelydescribed to us. He is *ἀνὴρ Αἰθίοψ*. Without doubt this is intended to declare his origin —as indeed this combination is elsewhere employed in this sense (see Kühnöl in loc). If then, notwithstanding, Olshausen assumes his Jewish descent as a certain fact "because proselytes were rarely acquainted with the Hebrew tongue," this is merely an idle conceit. For Luke must have purely had it in view to mislead us, if he introduced to us a wholly unknown personage merely as an *ἀνὴρ Αἰθιόψ* and yet expected us to understand thereby a Jew who merely had been born in Ethiopia. And, besides, who says the Ethioplan was reading Isaiah in Hebrew? Why could he not have read it in Greek—a language which, at this

time, was so widely diffused—(cf. Hug. Einleitung in das N. T. ii. 29—40, Thiersch Versuch zur Herstellung d. historischen Standpunctes S. 52—54) and in the Alexandrian version so commonly in use among the Jews (see Delitsch über den, Hebräerbrief in Rudelbachs Zeitschrift 1849. 279)? At any rate, we have here brought before us a man who was animated by a religious zeal far from common, and it is assuredly not possible for any one arbitrarily to decide what such a person could be capable of. Moreover, by this designation of his country he is described by his remoteness from the kingdom of Israel. As an Ethiopian or Cushite he is of the posterity of Ham, the father of Canaan the cursed (see Gen. x. 6), and by descent is connected with Nimrod (see Gen. x. 8) the first founder of the ungodly empires of the world. This name, therefore, points at a total and special alienation from all that is acceptable to God, even to a degree beyond that of other Gentiles (see Amos ix. 7; cf. Numbers xii. 1; and Kimchi in loc). Further, again, the traveller is made known to us as an εὐνοῦχος—a word which properly signifies a chamberlain; it is, however, the term commonly employed as an euphonistic designation of the eunuchs, so numerous in the service of oriental courts. It is true that notice has been called to a very general use of this word, according to which the term stands quite indefinitely for any court official, and instances of this usage have even been pointed out in the Alexandrian dialect of the New Testament. But let one only consider for a moment the great difference between the present passage and those to which Kühnöl appeals in support of this signification (Gen. xxxvii. 36 and 39). In both these passages εὐνοῦχος is joined with the genitive of Pharoah, and by this combination its dependent signification is determined, and therefore derives simply therefrom its more general sense. But here we have the direct contrary. The situation held by the Ethiopian is expressly and very definitely stated in what follows, and this his official description is preceded by the designation of εὐνοῦχος. In such a case this word must also retain its usual meaning, as being intended to describe also the natural condition of the man. To this reasoning it must also be added that, according to the proofs adduced by Wettstein on the passage both from Greek and Roman authors, eunuchs were not only the usual attendants

upon queens, but were also very frequently appointed to the office of chamberlain. As the names of Ethiopians and Cushites point not only to the distant Africa, but also occur in Asia (see Knobel Völkertafel S. 246, 263, 350) the determination which follows is a still more important addition to the character of the traveller—"of great authority" we are further told "under Candace queen of the Ethiopians" (ver. 27). It has been long acknowledged that this name of the queen remits us to the ancient Meroe on the Upper Nile, and further that this Meroe coincides with the very ancient Hamitic-Cushite name סְבָא (Gen x. 7, see Knobel ibid. S. 259, 260). Since, then, Seba is named among the most distant nations and lands (see Ps. lxxii. 10; Is. xliii. 2), this geographical notice of him must be intended to give greater intensity to the notion of this person's alienation and estrangement from Israel. And if now, besides, all this, allusion is made to his official dignity (*δυνάστης*) and to the rich treasures (*πᾶσα ἡ γάζα*) in his hands, this trait also is likewise designed to strengthen still further this same idea; for power and riches are even the very stays on which heathendom propped itself in its pride and defiance of the God of Heaven.

Having thus acquired a general survey of the whole description of the personage who is here brought before us, we must yet again recur to one particular feature therein, even because it exhibits to us in its sharpest ruggedness, the whole of that opposition in which by nature the Ethiopian stood to Judaism and to Christianity. The law prescribed the putting away of all eunuchs from the congregation of Israel (Deut. xxiii.). This exclusion followed directly from the position which was taken in the law (see Theolog. Commentar. i. 2. 500). Now, moreover, this law has furnished occasion to some commentators to take the word *εὐνοῦχος* in a more general sense; but as we have seen that such an assumption is here untenable, we must, therefore, realise the contradiction between the natural condition of the Ethiopian and the congregation of Israel. We must, it is true, think of this antagonism as already overcome in his instance. For in any case he had already been admitted into the congregation of Israel, since we read that he was coming from Jerusalem, where he had been to worship (ver. 27). And most evidently, too, Philip treats him as one who had already been admitted into Judaism.

Otherwise that would be at once accomplished in his case, which, however, at the baptism of Cornelius, required a solemn preparation. This difficulty, therefore, is not to be got over so easily as Meyer supposes, who thinks it enough to appeal to the very indistinct notion of proselytism of the gate.

While, then, all that we learn concerning the circumstances of this man, points to the sharpest antagonism to the kingdom of God, we meet here with such an adhesion to it as enforces our deepest astonishment. This black Cushite, in the far off Sheba, had heard of the name of Jehovah, and neither his power nor his wealth had prevented him from doing homage to it. He, however, is not contented with calling upon and celebrating the name of the Lord afar off; he rests not until he comes to Jeru salem, the city of God, in order to pray there to Jehovah amidst His people. How profound and sincere this his worship of Jehovah had been, is clearly and fully shewn on his journey homewards. As he is travelling along the way that goes to Gaza from which the road leads through the Arabian desert towards Egypt, and has reached the point where it begins to be desolate and little frequented, the Ethiopian, as he sits in his chariot, commences to read aloud the prophet Isaiah. From this we see that he had not performed his worship as a mere legal duty, and had then, self-satisfied, returned to his business and amusements. Painfully feeling his departure from the temple of Jehovah on the holy hill, and from this solemn worship at Jerusalem, he clings to another sanctuary, which he carries with him, in order that at home, in his distant land and solitude, he might have a compensation for the richer blessings of the house of God—namely, to the writings of Moses and the prophets. Not that his mind had been opened to understand the Holy Scriptures, and that he had found full satisfaction therein; we rather learn from his own mouth the very contrary; but he had a holy anticipation that a blessed mystery was hidden therein; after that does he seek and enquire with a yearning desire. It is not in the law that we find him reading and studying, since for him as a Gentile by birth, the law has a repelling rather than an attractive power. He turns to the prophetical writings, and above all, to those of Isaiah, the evangelist among the prophets. Here where is revealed that future blessedness of Israel, of which the Gentiles, both they that are

afar off, and they that are near, are invited to partake in all its fulness, does his inquiring eye most love to dwell.

As soon as we form to ourselves a lively conception of this pure flame of earnest longing after the salvation of Israel which burnt in the soul of this Ethiopian, we shall be able to understand how it was that whatever in his natural condition was opposed to the law furnished no permanent obstacle to his reception into the congregation of Israel. We cannot, indeed, at any time regard the law in Israel as a rigid letter; indeed it was soon shewn that the law could not be the way along which Israel was to attain to salvation. Accordingly from time to time we see many things arise in Israel which, although they were opposed to the law, nevertheless obtained a certain sanction. As regards, then, the present instance, we find even in the Old Testament itself a certain degree of support for our supposition. It is none else than the Prophet Isaiah, who, where he is opening as widely as possible to the Gentiles the access to salvation, writes as follows: "Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying: The Lord hath utterly separated me from His people; neither let the eunuch say: behold! I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenants; even unto them will I give in Mine house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off" (Is. lvi. 3, 5). According to this prophetic word of promise the barriers which the law set up against the eunuch were broken down; for it pointed to a kingdom above nature, in which the name of man was to be propagated by a different mode than by the begetting of a posterity. And after Isaiah had uttered this word of prophecy, in the times of Jeremiah, we meet with Ebed-melech, the Ethiopian, who was also an eunuch, in Jerusalem, at the court of the King; and at a time when no one took pity on the Prophet, discarded by all and left to perish, even then did this Ethiopian eunuch take care of Jeremiah; and in return for this act of mercy he received a special promise from Jehovah (see Jeremiah xxxviii. 7—13; xxxix. 16—18). Now, as we must without doubt look upon this Ebed-melech as already admitted into the congregation of Israel, even in the time of Zedekiah, in his case then the

might of the promise had triumphed over the letter of the law. And if the Alexandrian interpreters in Jer. xxxviii 7 (in the Septuagint 45, 7), have very remarkably left the predicate סָרִיס אִישׁ untranslated, it may perhaps be explained by the fact that from the context they concluded that the Ethiopian had been admitted into the congregation of Israel, and consequently saw an insuperable difficulty in the condition so contrary to the law which is implied in this predicate.

After these antecedent instances of the Old Testament we shall no longer feel any hesitation to regard as possible the admission of so zealous a Gentile as the Ethiopian eunuch is represented, into the congregation of Israel. Accordingly this Ethiopian, from the remotest distance, had been brought both in a natural and a spiritual sense, as near to the kingdom of God as absolutely was possible under the Old Testament economy. The Cushite reading and studying the prophet Isaiah is the direct opposite to the Jews. All that to him was a hindrance and an obstacle had of old been removed out of their way; but the latter clung to the image and to the shadow so as to be able to persist in their pride, whereas the heart of the latter had been rendered only the more docile and the more susceptible by the preparatory teaching of the Old Testament. And therefore it is providentially brought about that whereas to the Jews the word of the Gospel ceases gradually to be preached at all, this same word is by the special command of God brought to the Ethiopian, even in the very hour when by the hand of the Old Testament his heart had been led to the threshold of the fulfilment of salvation.

For while, with fixed eyes and thoughts, the Chamberlain dwells on that passsage of Scripture, which both in the inner and outer sense forms the proper core of the so-called second portion of Isaiah, and which from of old has been justly regarded as the centre of the whole promises of the Old Testament, Philip the Deacon observes him. Up to this moment Philip had gone on in obedience to the voice of the Angel of the Lord; and it was at this instant that the Spirit says to him, "Go near and join thyself to this chariot" (ver. 29). The instructions of the Spirit to Philip go no further; since all else would immediately suggest itself by the contact of the Spirit indwelling in Philip with the Ethiopian

thus reading in the book of the Prophet Isaiah. Philip now perceives what book it is that the Chamberlain is reading (ver. 30). As he cannot have listened to him long without being noticed, we may gather from hence how well-versed in the Scriptures this deacon must have been. Philip's question as to his understanding the passage was naturally called forth by the nature of the matter; for if the Ethiopian understood the prediction of the Prophet, then was he really a Christian; but if he understood it not, then was Philip called, according to the heavenly intimations which he had received, to lead the inquirer unto the Gospel. From this strangely impressive question the Chamberlain infers at once that the questioner must be a man who did himself understand it. In his modesty he avows his need of a guide, and in his joy at having found any one who probably could give him a help towards a right understanding, he invites Philip to come up and sit with him. It is evident that upon this the Ethiopian now read over again the passage of the prophet which he had been reciting, and added the perfectly sensible and appropriate question "of whom speaketh the prophet thus, of himself or of another?" (vv. 32, 34). Philip thereupon begins to explain this passage of the prophet, and from it goes on to preach to him the Gospel of Jesus. This discourse of Philip is recorded with especial solemnity (*ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ* cf. 2, 14), even because it is intended that the Ethiopian should be regarded as the representative of the remotest Gentiles, and that thereby the incident should receive an universal importance. We are not told how Philip led on the Chamberlain from the prediction of Isaiah to the Gospel, but we can however easily form a notion thereof. The Ethiopian had evidently read to good purpose; he had read to better purpose than those who hold it to be an impiety to suppose that in the 53d chapter of Isaiah any one else could be meant than the Messiah, but likewise to still better purpose than those who presume to see in the prophetic office of the Old Testament its perfect fulfilment. Now Philip could only have satisfied so intelligent a reader by pointing out to him how the vocation of the servant of the Lord who was to be given up to the people of Israel, which Isaiah here describes, both in its deepest humiliation and in its highest sublimity, was never fulfilled under the Old Testament, either by the people as a body, or by any single class or individual, but

that in these last days it had attained at length to its full realisation in the life and sufferings of Jesus of Nazareth. And herewith he would have got to the very centre of the Gospel and from this centre would naturally have developed all the leading tenets of the doctrine of the Gospel.

How fully justified we were in regarding the Ethiopian as one in whom the whole preparatory discipline for the Gospel had attained its end—as one whose heart had been opened by the Old Testament economy, prepared to receive the salvation of Jesus Christ, so that as soon as the word of fulfilment sounds in his ears, the full light of peace and satisfaction must replenish his soul, is proved by the instantaneous result of this preaching. For, as going on their way they came unto a certain water, the Eunuch said, "See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (ver. 36). The remarkable feature in this speech of the eunuch, on which Philip proceeds to act without delay, is that element which it contains of spontaneousness into which the highest susceptibility had so rapidly passed under the preaching of Philip. This extraordinary rapidity of development must have excited surprise even from the earliest times; for thereby alone can we account for the gloss so widely diffused among the manuscripts which attempts by question and answer to draw out the Ethiopian's confession of faith. But when we duly consider the perfectly extraordinary degree of preparation, this rapidity ceases to be surprising, and we can also well understand how it was that Philip felt no hesitation upon this requisition, and upon the stopping of the chariot which immediately followed thereupon, to enter the water, and to administer baptism to the Ethiopian.

If, then, we are further told: "when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip" (ver. 39), we see that the removal of Philip from the Chamberlain ensued so immediately after his baptism that its ministration could have been followed neither by any word or deed that might have served for the further strengthening of the Ethiopian. Since his departure is ascribed to the same higher command and guidance as had first called Philip to the conversion of the Chamberlain, this sudden withdrawal, designedly pressed upon our attention, is intended forcibly to remind us that with the baptism

the work of conversion was completed. And so the Chamberlain sensibly feels: he who a moment ago felt so painfully the want of a guide (ver. 31), now, after his baptism, proceeds on his way with joy, although he sees Philip no more (ver. 39), and neither on his journey, nor in his home, has to hope for any fellowship of any kind in his new faith and life. Bengel's remark on ver. 39 is very much to the purpose: "non vidit amplius, neque videre curavit propter gaudium. Qui nactus est Scripturam et Christum, jam carere potest homine hodego. Manus non leguntur a eunucho impositæ." And here we have a very striking confirmation of our remarks in the preceding section, with regard to the imposition of hands by the Apostles in Samaria. When, by means of the sign in Samaria, the significance and dignity of the Apostolate had once been established for all future ages of the Church, thereupon the immediate communion of Christ with man, as founded by the sacrament of baptism, was forthwith manifested in such complete operation and exhibition that human communion and mediation appears repressed in a most unusual way.

Now, there stands before our eyes the New Testament antitype of the Ethiopian eunuch, Ebed-melech, at the court of King Zedekiah. When all Israel despised the word and persecuted the servant of Jehovah, it was the Ethiopian Ebed-melech who alone had a heart for both. Therefore at the time when Jerusalem, together with its king and people, was menaced with the threat that they should be given, without pity, into the hands of Nebuchednezzar, a personal assurance of the divine protection and preservation is vouchsafed beforehand to this Ethiopian (see Jerem. xxxix. 16—18). In the same way at the very time when the rulers and the people of Israel had risen up against the word of the Lord and his Apostles, we here behold this Chamberlain from the far east, filled with a yearning desire for the light and life of the Gospel. Therefore, while the former, with their temple and worship, are given over to the expectation of judgment and fiery indignation, the Chamberlain attains to personal communion with the Lord in Heaven, and has such satisfaction in this communion that he needs neither man nor thing besides.

And just so is this event the fulfilment also of Isaiah's pro-

phecy of the adoption of the eunuch. The conditions which are laid down for the adoption of the eunuchs are in this case fulfilled to the utmost. A truer dependence on Jehovah is not easily conceivable than that which we witness in this Chamberlain of Ethiopia travelling to Jerusalem in order to worship in the temple there, and absorbed on his homeward journey in the study of the Holy Scriptures. Accordingly, a memorial is here set up for him, which far surpasses the most numerous posterity of sons and of daughters: by his piety and conversion he is consecrated in the memory of the Church of Christ as the first fruits of all the Gentiles who, by the word of the Law and of the promise, have been brought to God to find in Christ everlasting peace and joy.

The deacon Philip, then, appears as the harbinger of the Gospel to the Gentiles, to the Samaritans of those near, and to the Cushites of those afar off. And in both cases there is shewn on the part of the Gentiles a special susceptibility, whereas among the Jews the disposition to receive the Gospel is fast dying away. And now we are also in a condition to understand the supernatural element in the mission of Philip to the Ethiopian. Several modern commentators, as Kühnöl, Meyer, and Olshausen, have been disposed to give a natural explanation of the words *πνεῦμα κυρίου ἥρπασε τὸν φίλιππον* (ver. 39). Bengel, however, justly appeals to the parallel passages in the Old Testament, 1 Kings xviii. 12; 2 Kings ii. 16; moreover, as Zeller observes, (see S. 384) the following words *φίλιππος δὲ εὑρέθη εἰς Ἄζωτον* imply his miraculous withdrawal. Obviously it was intended, both by the beginning and end which are alike supernatural, to set forth the whole event as an important sign. For, as an historical epoch, the conversion of the Ethiopian does not fall under consideration, since its consequences are left absolutely unnoticed. As a sign, however, it is very remarkable; for it realises to us the conversion of the remotest Gentiles, in the uttermost parts of the earth (see i. 8), and in truth not by the instrumentality of the Apostles, but by another whom the Lord by His Angel and Spirit had called forth out of His Church and commissioned for this work. By this view the wonderful character of this event is duly justified in the context of our history. If, then, at the close of the paragraph we are considering, it is further said:

"but Philip was found at Azotus, and passing through he preached in all the cities till he came to Cæsarea" (ver. 40), we must infer from this that Philip, although subsequently also he was employed in preaching the Gospel, yet he did not proceed in the same method as that reported of him in the preceding circumstantial accounts. He did not, for instance, turn to the Gentiles exclusively; and from this circumstance it once more becomes clear to us that in the events in Samaria and on the road between Jerusalem and Gaza, we have to recognize not so much steps of an unbroken progress of history as rather significant intimations with regard to the future.

§ 16. CONVERSION AND CALL OF SAUL OF TARSUS.

(Chap. ix. 1—36.)

In the course of the history which is laid before us in the first eight chapters of the Acts, the Gospel, it is true, has already been brought unto the Gentiles. Philip the deacon has baptized not only Samaritans but also the Chamberlain from Ethiopia. But if the transference of the Gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles is to be carried yet further, and if it is to come to this that the declining susceptibility among the Jews is utterly to decay, and none but the Gentiles, whose willing mind meets us throughout the narratives of the eighth chapter, are to give ear to the word of the Lord, a great and urgent want for the future development of the church must thereupon necessarily arise. For instance, no one could venture to say that this development had already been set on its course by the proceedings in Samaria and those on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, and that it might very well be left to itself. For, on the one hand, these events have more of the nature of significant tokens than of vigorous links of historical continuity; and secondly, in the one case as well as in the other, an intermediate link was furnished between the Gospel and the Gentiles. Ever since their migration from the lands of the east, the Samaritans had shewn a disposition towards Judaism, and the Chamberlain from Ethiopia joined with the Jews in the worship at Jerusalem. But now

when Israel, persevering in its stiffneckedness, became liable to the vengeance which, even on the day of Pentecost, Peter had threatened them with, and when consequently the Church of Christ must now be gathered from out of the Gentiles, without any mediation of Judaism; where, in that case, is the courageous heart to be found to think of a new people of God without any connection with the old? Where shall the tie be found to hold together a community of Gentiles set free from the consecrated organisation of Israel? Will the holy twelve be likely to furnish this boldness to unloose and this vigour to bind? Of the twelve Apostles we might certainly expect that they would go one step further than was allowed to Philip the deacon, namely, that they would really introduce the work of the gathering of the people of God out of the Gentiles (to which this baptism by Philip pointed), and establish it for all futurity. But now let us call to mind what has already been done; how the Apostles remained in Jeruslem precisely at that memorable moment when Israel had entered on the last stage of its obduracy, and it was left to the dispersed members of the community to preach the Gospel out of Jerusalem (see viii. 1, 4); how even the Apostles, after they had been convinced of the susceptibility of the Samaritan Gentiles for the Gospel, nevertheless returned to Jerusalem (see viii. 25), whereas Philip received the commission to seek the Gentile from the distant Ethiopia and to baptise him. When we call all these things to mind, then the doubt arises whether the Apostles were intended to preside over the working out of that development of the Church from whose premonitory tokens they had evidently and designedly kept aloof.

If, then, the twelve Apostles were not entrusted with the calling of the Gentiles, and yet an Apostolical initiative and supervision was manifestly necessary for this new domain of the Church of Christ, a new apostolical power must be created. The Lord who had called and sent forth the twelve, is even still the same, except that He is not any longer on Earth, but reigns in Heaven; but inasmuch as His glorified body is the pure and perfect result of His whole earthly life, there can be nothing to hinder Him from calling even from Heaven, by means of this glorified body, an Apostle, and from sending him forth. Such an Apostle, however, would have a somewhat different relation to the Church from that of

the others, while the authority would rest on the tradition existing in the Church. He who was called from Heaven must painfully acquire his by nothing but the demonstration of the Spirit and power. By the road of self-proving and of attention to the signs of the times, the Church of the first-fruits at Jerusalem must slowly arrive at the conviction, that it was not by means of the organism of Israel, however given and consecrated by God himself, that the Church of Christ could fulfil its vocation of embracing all nations and tongues even to the uttermost parts of the earth, and that for this purpose there was needed a new direct intervention of the Lord in Heaven, by which an Apostolate might be created which did not rest on any Israelitic organisation. If, thereupon, the Church submits, and giving honour to the truth, desires to have no will but that of her Lord and her head, then by reason of her supremacy she is justified in requiring that he who gives himself out to be such a new Apostle, should furnish to her sufficient proof thereof; while, on the other hand, he who thus, from the heavens and from the kingdom of God, has received his call to be an Apostle, must be furnished with such endowments as satisfactorily furnish the necessary proof of his vocation to the Church.

Thus, then, under the guidance of the history of the Acts itself, we have recognized the place for a thirteenth Apostle, and also the general conditions of his office. We shall not therefore wonder if it is precisely at the very point, where the antecedent circumstances had pointed out its necessity, that the Apostolical history introduces the wonderful mysterious beginning of this Apostolate, any more than we shall be surprised that exactly in proportion as this mysterious beginning advances in its mighty evolution and operations, from henceforth the work before us devotes itself exclusively to that development of the Church thus intimated. The views of Olshausen are truly singular. On the one hand, he thus correctly expresses the relation which subsisted between the twelve and Paul: "the cause of this very phenomenon, that Paul stands forth in such importance in the Apostolical Church, is surely not to be looked for solely in the greatness of his mental powers, his zeal and truthfulness, but even principally in the circumstance that the twelve were primarily destined for the people of Israel, and that it was not until the Jews, in obdurate unbelief, had cast from them the word of reconciliation, that they

turned in part to the Gentiles; whereas the proper destination of Paul was to be a messenger to the Gentile world" (iv. 468); and yet, on the other hand, he has just before advanced, as his own conviction, the wide-spread prejudice, that the history of the Acts from the ninth chapter to the end, drops that general character which it had exhibited in the previous portions (iv. 467). As if the labours of St Paul were not of an universal character for the Church of the Gentiles, which even to the present day comprises the whole existence of the Church of Christ on earth, just as much as the speeches and doings of Peter and the twelve bore universally the first stage of the development of the Church.

Now that we have thus set generally in a clear light, the position and significance of the conversion of Paul of Tarsus in relation both to the history of the Church, and to the narrative of St Luke, we shall be better able to enter upon the exposition of the principal incidents of the present important section.

Both by the name, and also especially by the particle ἔτι, the beginning of the narrative before us clearly carries us back to earlier events—viz., to chap. vii. 59; viii. 1, 3. We are to picture to ourselves this Saul, not only in the same state of hostility to and persecution of the Church, but must suppose that this state had attained even to a greater height. The pleasure he had felt in the murder of Stephen has become an habitual temper, so that he nourishes in his heart a mortal hatred against all the disciples of the Lord. And so replete is he with this deadly animosity, that it cannot but display itself in his whole being and conduct (see on the strong expression ἐμπνέων, the illustrations adduced by Wettstein ad loc). To such enhanced feelings of hate his conduct corresponds. It no longer allows him to rest content with going about and seizing the believers in the houses of Jerusalem; it forces him to carry his persecution even beyond the limits of the Jewish ground. He turns his regards to Damascus —the ancient and populous city on the great road of communication which connects Western and Eastern Asia, where many Jews were settled (Joseph B. J. 1, 2, 25, 2, 20, 2). He solicits the high priests for letters of authority, in order that by means of the Synagogue in that city he might bring the Christians (who as Jews, still maintained their connection with the Synagogues) whether they were men or women, bound and prisoners to Jeru-

salem (vv. 1, 2). As it is taken for granted as an obvious inference that the high priest complied with this demand of Saul, we see that even in the case of the highest functionary of the powers of government the zeal of persecution against the Christians had by no means been appeased by the blood of the first martyr and the first general persecution against the Church in Jerusalem (see viii. 1, 3). In Saul of Tarsus, however, there beats the self-conscious soul of this persecuting zeal; he is the personified principle of the antagonism to Christianity on which Judaism had now entered; such as he was when introduced to us in the history vii. 59 and viii. 1, such had he gone on, and in this growth he is here sensibly set before us.

In modern times it has become very usual to represent Saul as perplexed while on his journey to Damascus by many doubts, scruples and conflicts with regard to the persecution he had in view. It is assumed that the joy of believing which shone forth in the dying Stephen had made such an indelible impression on his mind that many passages of Holy Writ could not fail forcibly to suggest to him, so learned in the Scriptures, the Messiahship of Jesus (see Neander Geschichte der Pflanzung 1 S. 111. Olshausen iv. 469). It is much to Meyer's credit that he has decidedly set himself free from this prejudice. So far is the narrative of Luke from favouring this hypothesis of a growing change in the mind of Saul, that it evidently asserts the very contrary. How ever should we, or how can we ever, venture to suppose that the martyrdom of Stephen made any impression on Saul the Pharisee, when Luke, (evidently of purpose), describes him to us as feasting on the sight (ἦν συνευδοκῶν 8, 1, cf. 22, 20) of this exalted spectacle which brought before his eyes the fiery indignation of Jehovah against the blasphemer? What conjectures ought we or dare we indulge in as to the effect which the remembrance of Stephen's death may have worked upon him, when Luke tells us that he had gone on as he begun until the measure of his zeal ran over? And why thould we delude ourselves with any imaginary power of Scriptural passages to exercise a modifying influence on him, when we know that all the zeal of Saul was given to the letter of the Holy Scripture (see vi. 11—13; xxii. 3; xxvi. 5; Gal. i. 14; Phil. iii. 6)? It is evidently the purpose of Luke's narrative to call our attention to the fact

that Saul was suddenly stopped in the very midst of his full, unbroken, unchecked course of persecution against the Christians, or as Bengel has rightly expressed it, in summo fervore peccandi ereptus et conversus est.

We must now realise what it was that happened so suddenly to Saul, just as he was arriving towards the end of his journey. Now Paul, as it is well known, in those discourses of his which have been preserved to us in the Apostolical history, twice takes occasion to speak of this event (vv. 22, 6—16, 26) (12—18). We must therefore pay the more consideration to the intimations given us in these speeches, especially as some people imagine that they can discover contradictions in them, and have thence taken occasion to throw a doubt on the objective truth of the whole story (see Baur der Apostel Paulus p. 60—63, Zeller Theolog. Jahrb. 1849, 399—402). Let us begin with considering the three contradictions which, it is pretended, are contained in these three distinct accounts, and which Zeller describes in the following manner: 1st. In xxvi. 14, it is said of the companions of Paul that they all fell with Paul to the earth, whereas in ix. 7, we are told on the contrary that they were struck dumb and remained standing while Paul fell to the ground in fear. 2d, Of the same persons it is said in ix. 7, they heard indeed the voice which spoke with Paul, but saw no man; but, on the other hand, in xxii. 9, the reverse is stated, that they saw the light which appeared to him, but did not hear the voice. 3d, A part of the words which xxvi. 16—18 are put into the mouth of the Lord on his appearance, is given in ix. 15, as the speech of the Lord to Ananias, and differently again in xxii. 15—21, they are adduced partly as the words of Ananias and partly as the address of Jesus on the occasion of a second appearance to Paul.

With respect to the last discrepancy, the passage xxii. 21 does not in fact rightly belong to the matter before us, for the phrase "afar off," which is so important in this context, belongs to this passage alone; and the other few words in which the call of St Paul is spoken of, are of so general a nature, and besides so very far from being at all strictly coincident with xxvi. 17, that the identity of the two addresses can by no means be asserted. As to the other discrepancy which still remains, it is really a question whether what is given in xxvi. 16—18 is not to be taken as the

words immediately addressed by the Lord to Saul at his first appearance, which, however, were passed over by Luke, because it was only subsequently and upon the mission of Ananias, that they obtained a true force and signification. But even if we adopt the other view of the passage, still, in spite of what Zeller urges to the contrary, there is a perfect consistency between the facts of the case, and Meyer's remark that in his address to Agrippa, Paul condenses his narrative and "so that which was only subsequently enjoined and by the mediation of another, is put at once into the mouth of the immediate author of that injunction." And if Zeller seeks to confine this liberty of Luke or rather of Paul by objecting "that where historical truth is the issue, there in fact the time when, the place where, and the person by whom anything is done or said belong even to the thing itself," he does but thereby misrepresent the matter, since, independently of the passage xxii. 15, which Zeller has here adduced, though it does not belong to the matter before us, St Luke, in his historical account has accurately enough detailed the fact with all its circumstances of time, place, and persons.

While, however, this third difference is merely of a formal nature, the two others relate to actual diversities in the state of the facts. But these variations are so far from being contradictions that they even contribute essentially towards furnishing us with a clear representation of the whole matter. We, for instance, cannot be satisfied, as Neander, Olshausen, and Meyer have contented themselves, with regarding these variations as bearing only on subordinate points, and with vindicating thereby the principal matter as being altogether independent of and untouched by them. For although it may well be that variations in trifling circumstances, even if they arise from want of exactness and care, serve to remove suspicions of fabrication, and are so far a guarantee of the historical character of the narrative; nevertheless, in every case where an historian has hitherto escaped the suspicion of a want of accuracy in matters even of trifling moment, it is a duty incumbent on every commentator to search and examine whether the seeming discrepancy in the narratives of the same matter may not be traced back to objective grounds, and consequently afford some essential and designed assistance towards a fuller and more perfect representation of the fact. Let us now

consider the inconsistency objected to in the second place. First of all we will determine the common element which is contained in these two apparently contradictory statements : in both, the sensations ascribed to Saul are distinct ; while those of his companions are indistinct ; in the ninth chapter it is said of the latter that they heard but did not see, whereas, both seeing and hearing are recounted in the case of the former. In the twenty-second chapter we are told of the companions of Saul, that they saw but did not hear, whereas again both are ascribed to Saul. Now, the discrepancy in this common statement consists chiefly in this, that in one case seeing, and in the other the hearing, is denied to the companions of Saul. We must now inquire whether the diversity is of this kind, that in both cases the object alluded to is the same. If it be, then we have here an undeniable contradiction, but if not, then it is possible that we may find in it some supplementary trait. Most decidedly the former case is not the true one : in ch. ix. 7 it is said of the companions that " they saw no one ;" but in xxii. 9, " they saw the light ;" in the former passage it is also stated they heard the voice ; in the latter that they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. A person and a light are assuredly two very different objects ; and a voice and Him that spake are also different. And in truth the very context shows that they are in this wise distinct : the light is the general impression made by the whole vision (see ix. 3 ; xxii. 6 ; xxvi. 13), and in the midst of this supernatural (xxvi. 13) brightness there appears to Paul a person, who announces himself to him as Jesus (ix. 17). While his companions saw the general features of the whole phenomenon that surrounded them, the centre remained hidden from their sight, and with this explanation the impression made on their faculty of hearing very accurately corresponds—Jesus makes himself known to Paul in definite words ; but as for those with him, just as they discerned not the holy form, so were they unable to attain to a distinct apprehension of these mysterious words, but they heard only the voice, but not the voice of him who spake (see Vitringa. Obs. Sac. xi. 403). Thus the discrepancies bring us exactly the same result as we already found in what was common to these two accounts ; viz. that Paul received the clear and definite impression, but his companions an indefinite one ; and, indeed, while the narrative

of Luke notices this contrast in respect to that of the seeing, Paul, in his speech, alludes to it with reference to the hearing.

As regards the history, then, the advantage we gain from the comparison of these parallel passages is, in fact, no slight one. On all sides we learn that the heavenly phenomenon which operated to the conversion of Saul, made an audible and a visible impression both on himself and his companions; but that this impression was so different on the two parties respectively, that whereas to his fellow-travellers nothing more was vouchsafed than the perception of a supernatural splendour and sound coming from the Heavens, yet for himself there stood forth in the midst of the brightness a personal form, and the sound shaped itself into distinct words in the Hebrew tongue (see 26, 14). As soon as we once have brought this distinctly and clearly before our minds, we shall forthwith be able to form a just idea of the nature of this wonderful manifestation. It is an event of a higher order. It does, most certainly, enter within the sensible domain of ordinary human perception, but nevertheless, without prejudice to its reality, belongs to a more exalted sphere of existence. That this is the true character of the phenomenon before us, has already been pointed out correctly enough by Neander (see ibid. S. 113), but still more distinctly and carefully by Hengstenberg (see History of Balaam, p. 378). Indeed the latter has referred us also to the instructive parallel passage, John xii. 28, 29, where, on the occasion of an event which belongs to the same class, a similar difference is noticed in regard to the perception of hearing in the case of the respective witnesses of it. Another and equally instructive parallel to the passage before us is found in Dan. x. 7, where the prophet gives an account of a vision which was vouchsafed to him, when, with many others, he was by the side of the river Hiddekel. He, indeed, alone saw the vision, for a great quaking fell upon the men that were with him, so that they fled. Evidently we have here also an instance of a difference of susceptibility in the different witnesses with regard to the visibility of a heavenly phenomenon.

And it is precisely this last parallel from the sphere of similar manifestations, that will furnish us with the best elucidation of the third and remaining discrepancy which we adduced in the first place. While in ix. 7 it is said that the men who journeyed

with him stood speechless in astonishment; in xxvi. 13 we are told that all his fellow-travellers, as well as Saul himself, fell to the earth. Bengel, in ix. 7, has already remarked on this difference, "ceciderant illi quoque, sed ante Saulum surrexerunt sua sponte." In fact, this view, which Kühnöl also follows, is perfectly consistent with the matter, and altogether far from arbitrary, as Meyer asserts of it. When we consider the diversity of impression which, as we have seen, our narrative sets forth as forcibly as possible, we are driven to ascribe to this impression different consequences, in the case of Saul on the one hand, and on that of his companions on the other. This, in our present narrative, is primarily set forth as the principal point: Therefore it is said of Saul "he fell to the earth;" on the other hand: "the men who journeyed with him stood speechless." It is quite true that here no notice at all is taken of the falling to the earth of his fellow-travellers. But, in the case of his companions, this, as the immediate result of the general impression of terror, may have lasted only an instant, whereas Saul remained lying on the ground under the weight of the manifestation and the voice pressing upon him personally. Is it then in the slightest degree a violation of historical truth if this transitory moment of the falling to the ground of his companions is passed over in silence in order to allow the contrast of Saul's continuing to lie prostrate to stand out more distinctly and forcibly in the narrative? Zeller, it is true, asserts that, however subtilly we may explain it away, the contradiction still remains. Well then, we will follow his reasoning. He says, "in the pluperfect (εἱστήκεισαν ix. 7) it is undeniably implied that during the address, previously detailed, of Jesus to Saul, the men who were journeying with him remained standing, whereas, according to xxvi. 14, it was after all had fallen to the earth that this speech followed. Now, for my part, I cannot in truth see how that which Zeller maintains is necessarily involved in the use of the pluperfect, but I readily concede what he infers from the use of the participle which follows; but still I deny that it involves any contradiction of xxvi. 14. For the falling of all to the earth, which, according to the well-known force of the aorist participle, is here spoken of as having occurred and been brought to an end, does not by any means exclude the idea of those who are not at all concerned in

the following address having risen again from that posture. For it is deserving of consideration that, according to ix. 3 4, it was not the sound but the blaze of light that, even in Saul's case, was the cause of his falling to the ground. We have, therefore, here precisely the same course of events as, in the passage adduced above, Daniel tells us happened to himself in the vision vouchsafed to him at the river Hiddekel. The men that were with me, he says, had fled and hid themselves in fear; while he himself retained no strength and had fallen to the ground at the sight (see Dan. x. 2, 7, 8, 9).

When, then, we forthwith turn back in thought to the different susceptibilities in Saul and in his companions for receiving the manifestation of Jesus, it does, indeed, almost appear as if we must, however unwillingly, make up our minds to the conclusion that some secret emotions had been going on in the mind of Saul which were in contradiction to his outward actions and character, and had long been preparing him for this grand manifestation of Christ. If that appearance of Christ which was imparted to Saul on his journey to Damascus presented no aspect which Saul the persecutor of the Christians could and necessarily must have understood, then, would such an inference be a just one. But we shall immediately see that such an aspect was indeed presented by it, nay, that this was in truth its peculiar and proper aspect, which only, when all its speaking rigour has been fully felt and understood, become transfigured into the light of Gospel grace. Wherein, then, consists the difference between Saul and his companions in their position relatively to this vision and revelation? It is even the very zeal of Saul the Pharisee against the Christian community, thirsting for revenge and slaughter, which renders the appearance and the speech of Jesus intelligible to him; whereas both remained closed and shut up to the minds of his companions who, although they were going on the same road and on the same errand as himself, yet had no independent convictions with regard to the matter itself.

The words which form the very centre of the address of Jesus to Saul is the startling question, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" for this question is found in all the three narratives exactly in the same way and in the same words (see ix. 4; xxiii.

7; xxvi. 14). And, in fact, this question has so much weight for Saul, that he could not have borne anything more. Saul, does, it is true, ask "Who art thou Lord?" to which the answer was given "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," (see ix. 5; xxii. 8; xxvi. 15). But the chief point in the address remains still these first words, for Bengel is doubtless right when he says, conscientia ipsa facile diceret; Jesum esse. Moreover, the additional clause, "whom thou persecutest," recalls impressively those first words again.

To these words, the first that Jesus addressed to Saul, and which in the narrative are set forth so impressively, we must attribute the principal influence in working the conversion of Saul.

Twice does the Lord address Saul by name. He designs thereby to intimate to him that he has something to say to him very impressive, something demanding his utmost attention, (see Gen. xxii. 11; Matth. xxiii. 37; Luke xxii. 31). It is also very possible that, by this forcible and emphatic repetition of his name, the conscience of Saul, who was a Benjamite, like Saul the Son of Kish (see Philip. iii. 5; Rom. xi. 1; 1 Sam. ix. 1, 2; Acts xiii. 21) may have been strongly reminded of his resemblance in character to the rejected king of Israel. For just as the former with his men, driven by an evil spirit which had taken possession of him, went forth to seize and destroy the Lord's anointed, so had this man with his followers, gone out full of murderous zeal, to persecute and to put to death the members of Christ, who had been anointed with the everlasting Spirit. Saul of Tarsus was not, it is true, a king in Israel, but the chief authorities in Jerusalem were ready to do his bidding (see xxii. 5). In the tendencies and the temper now cherished by the Jewish people towards the Church of Christ, Saul was the leader and guide, at once most independent and clearly conscious of his objects. From the appearance and preaching of Stephen he had derived the conviction that this sect of the disciples of Jesus stood in irreconcilable opposition to the law and the sanctuary of Israel (see vi. 11, 14), and he therefore believed that he was labouring in the most holy service and work of Jehovah who from heaven had given to his people an everlasting law, when he persecuted this godless sect even to the death (comp. Deut.

xiii). This consciousness, this conviction, is evidently the central point of the whole inner being of Saul of Tarsus, and precisely on this centre do the words of Jesus strike like a thunderbolt.

From this moment Saul, in his inmost heart, must have immediately felt an irresistible conviction that the person which revealed itself to him from out of the supernatural light of Heaven was no other and no less than the Almighty Lord of Heaven. What else can the involuntary prostration of all who witnessed the vision signify than the adoration of the creature before its Lord and Creator? consequently Saul addresses the vision (according to all the three narratives) by the name of Lord! He whom the glory of Heaven thus shone around; He before whom all fell to the dust, is to him, therefore, the same Being as appeared to Ezekiel; before whom Isaiah trembled; He who descended on Mount Sinai, and spoke with Moses, and who gave him the living word of the law (see vii. 38). It is He in whose service and work Saul supposed himself to have been all his life long engaged, and especially at a moment when he is allowing himself no repose in order to deliver up to the appointed tribunal of death the incorrigible enemies of his Lord. But how does all, that in consequence of this vision and address forces itself upon his affrighted soul, stand out in stern and rigid opposition to all its previous ideas and convictions! He might, he had thought, well hope to receive the blessing and approbation of God on his holy work, and now behold it is accursed! He is apprised that his supposed zeal for Jehovah the Lord of Heaven, was in fact a zeal against the Lord of Heaven, for with his own ears, and in his inmost soul, he hears that the Lord of Heaven is Jesus of Nazareth. In the disciples of Jesus he had hitherto seen the enemies of Jehovah, the schismatics who blasphemed and sought to overthrow the law and the sanctuary; and now he is constrained to hear and could not withdraw from the sound of the words that penetrated his very inmost soul, declaring that these supposed enemies of Jehovah were so wonderfully and intimately associated with the Lord of Heaven that He speaks of them not merely as His people, or His, but so identifies himself with them that, although gleaming in the light of Heaven and casting to the earth all that opposes itself, He yet designates as His own the sufferings inflicted on those who acknowledged Him.

Up to this point the impression of the Heavenly vision upon Paul is irresistible ;—what, however, its after effect is to be, whether by his own strength he will raise himself from the abyss into which he sees himself thrown, or whether he will surrender himself to the overwhelming power of a truth of which he before had no conception, that is left to himself to determine. For when he says in xxvi. 19, that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision (ἀπειθὴς), and therefore had willingly followed it, it is therein implied that the contrary would have been possible. Baur consequently is quite right when he mantains that the supposition of a miracle in the psychological domain must be rejected (see Der. Apost. Paul. p. 74), in so far as we understand thereby a constraining influence of supernatural facts as affecting the determinations of the will of man, and so far as we suppose, consequently, that in the case before us we can assume that the direction of Saul's will had been necessarily influenced by the manifestation and words of Jesus. Indeed Olshausen does actually so express himself: he mantains that this first appearance of Jesus as regards the will of Saul was irresistible, and seeks to avoid the Angustinian doctrine of gratia irresistibilis merely by admitting that in the subsequent life of Paul occasions occurred in which the grace which had been given to him might have been lost (iv. 473). In this assertion we can only see the consequence of an indistinct and incorrect apprehension of the relation which subsists between the divine causation and the free will of man; and in regard to the case now before us we appeal to the fact that this view is refuted by that confession of the Apostle which we lately quoted. It is true that Olshausen also supports his view by a saying of the Apostle in the same speech before Agrippa, and by the sentence which, in the speech before us, is joined on immediately to the first address of Jesus to Saul. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." This is a well known proverbial expression taken from the driver of a draught ox, which occurs very frequently amongst the Greeks and the Romans, and which moreover could not be strange to the Hebrew, since the practice itself was also common among the Jews (see Judg. iii. 31 ; 1 Sam. xiii. 21 ; Jerm. xxxviii. 25 ; comp. Bochart Hierozoic. 1, 385, 387), so that clearly Zeller needed not to wonder at the allusion appearing in this passage. Olshausen may be

perfectly justified in arguing that the words σκληρόν σοι, "it is hard for thee" cannot consistently be so understood as that impossibility was intended to be expressly excluded; not, that is, as if it was meant: it is difficult for thee, it is true, but by no means impossible; on the contrary, what it is meant to convey is surely this: as it goes hard with an animal of draught if it proves restive and kicks against the driver's goad, since all its struggles are only against itself, and it must at last submit; so is it also with thee; —all thy struggles against thy master are only against thyself, and they hurt only thine own flesh and blood. But from these very just considerations Olshausen ought to have come to a totally different conclusion. The expression forcibly recals the assertion of Jesus concerning the camel and the eye of the needle; as the camel goes not through the eye of a needle, but must remain on the outside, so also must the steer give up his kicking and yield to the goad. But the difficulty and impossibility which is alluded to in the last metaphor is just as little the resistance against free grace as the former; but the very reverse. The difficulty and the impossibility lies in the opposition of human nature to grace. This view is alone consistent with the circumstances. In fact Saul is at the time in full motion and work, but just as Saul the son of Kish, when he was bitter against David and went out against him with his armies, was not impelled by the still and peaceful spirit of God, but by the evil spirit of unrest which came upon him from a strange domain; so also Saul of Tarsus was driven on and chased by a wild restless spirit of zeal for the law and the pride of the justification by the law. Is he not indeed like a steer that follows not its own will, but is driven along at the will of another, and that with all its efforts cannot escape from the yoke without suffering in its own flesh and blood?

It is in this sense therefore that the expression finds an immediate reference to what is before us and possesses a simple relation to it. On the contrary, according to the view in which it is, we admit, generally understood, it must be reduced to an allusion that is in no way immediately obvious, and which can only be inferred from the relation between Jesus and Saul. For such a reference, however, we should be justified in looking for an ἔσται. Besides the image, appropriate as it is in the sense we have pointed out, seems to become most inappropriate when we apply it to the

relation then commencing between Jesus and Saul. Jesus would thus be represented as the driver with the threatening goad, and Paul as the steer who works on from fear alone. And would this be the similitude under which, after pressing the whole mind of Saul with his terrors, the Lord would be likely to manifest, for the first time, his grace? Moreover, it is evidently the design of the Lord to keep the Apostle to the first simple effect of his terror, and it is on this account improbable that he would forthwith have added to his first words a totally repugnant idea. Lastly, the omission of these words of St Luke's narrative (see xxii. 7) is also best explained when we assume that they add nothing essential to the first address. The result of these remarks is the very reverse of that which Olshausen aims at. The Lord is so far from taking from Saul his self-determination with its struggles and labours that he immediately points out to him a struggle of life and death which he had to undergo before he could free himself from his unworthy position. In truth, by these remarks, we would guard, most decidedly, against the idea of a constraining operation of the miracle on the will of Saul, but not in order with Baur to derive the conversion of Saul from his own mental state in a natural way (see ibid. S. 74). We indeed have no wish to admit anything like a magical operation of the miracle on the soul of Saul, but neither can we with Neander (see ibid. S. 118) have recourse to any preparatory thoughts and previous conflicts in his mind.

Following, then, the indubitable guidance of our narrative, we take the appearing and the address of Jesus from Heaven to have been the absolute commencing point of the conversion of Saul. After the Lord had put to him the first pregnant question, substantially he said nothing else to him than that at a later period he should be told what more he was to do (see ix. 6). Consequently it is left to him as his first task to weigh with himself this address of the Lord and to allow it a free working. We know it, and Paul also himself asserts it (xxvi. 19), that he readily entered into the demand here so strongly made upon him. What, therefore, was the result of this assenting tendency of his will is not stated in express words in our narrative; however, much lies at hand, from which we, as stewards of the mysteries of God, are not only justified, but in duty bound to attempt to form a

just conception of the inner course of the conversion of Saul. Our narrative leaves us by no means without hints on what took place in the inner man of Saul in consequence of the heavenly vision. It has thrown a perfectly clear light on the former state and condition of his mind; it has accurately informed us of what happened to Saul from without, and suddenly arrested him in his course; it also describes to us his bodily condition, in consequence of the miraculous event (see 8, 9); it gives us a clear hint as to change having taken place in his inner man (ver. 11); and, finally, narrates to us very precisely, how and whereby his external position also becomes entirely altered. Besides, we must close our eyes if we would not see the rich light which shines upon us from the discourses and letters of the Apostle, in which he allows us to contemplate his inmost thoughts, and throws the fullest light upon these mysterious beginnings of his new life.

The two first points, which in our preceding remarks we have estimated, lead us to the understanding of the third point—the description of the external change which had taken place. When Saul arose, it is said, he saw no man, although his eyes were open, and in this condition he remained three days, seeing nothing, during which time he neither ate nor drank. As to the cause of his blindness, we shall doubtless be right, if with J. C. Baier (de cæcitate Pauli, Sylloge Diss. ed. Has and Iken, 11. p. 604), paying regard to ix. 18 and xxii. 11, we see the source of it in the brightness of the light which proceeded from the manifestation of Jesus. Naturally this view does not exclude the idea, that the external condition of the man thus effected, was intended also to be regarded as an expressive symbol of his internal state. As Grotius says on ix. 8: Ea fuit imago Pauli qualis autehac fuerat, speciem habens hominis eruditi in lege, cum plane animo cœcus esset. In which emblematic signification we must not overlook the trait which is expressly brought before us, that Saul with his open eyes saw no man, and consequently to others did not present the appearance of a blind person, although nevertheless he was so in truth. The fact that this so significant condition of Saul is referred back to the manifestation of Jesus, stands as Caspar Streso (see ibid p. 609) so happily remarks in the most beautiful unison with the declaration of Christ, in John ix. 39, 41. But since the effect produced by Jesus on Saul was intended

to operate to his salvation and not to his destruction, we have reason to say further with Streso: it happened unto him for this end, "ut per corporalem cœcitatem cœcitatem mentis disceret." In fact, if, as we have supposed, Saul yielded to the exhortation suggested by the appearance of Jesus, its most immediate effect must have been, that by means of this immediate operation of the heavenly glory of Jesus on his bodily condition, he discerned the truth it was intended to convey to his conscience.

It could not fail to happen that all the thoughts which agitated the mind of Saul, in consequence of the Lord's address to him, must have centred round the law. The law of Moses had been the end and aim of all his thoughts and efforts, and now that which measured by the standard of the law he had held to be the best and holiest course, had been branded as an impious crime. Is then the law not my defence, he must have asked, against such accusations? Or, have I as yet not really understood the law? His startled soul must have cast an anxious glance at the law, and then it must have become clear to him, that hitherto he had only looked upon the curtains, but had never penetrated the sanctuary itself. It had happened unto him, as unto all the sect of the Pharisees, who with their prejudices and additions had made void its holy meaning (see Matt. v. 17—48), who had taken the outward things of the law to be its most essential requirements, while they lightly regarded its great commands which were directed to the heart (Matt. xxiii. 23). The law of Moses, it is true, does impress the superficial observer with the idea of a predominantly external ceremony, and so a man might easily adopt and strengthen himself in a proud self-delusion. But now the whole being of Saul is moved to its inmost depths. Now at length he becomes aware that the law is not satisfied with the works of righteousness, but demands in addition a temper pure and free from evil desires. The brief commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," which hitherto he had always overlooked, now became to him so highly significant, that by occasion of this commandment he first of all discerned the true nature of sin (Rom. vii. 7). Now at length he discovered that the meaning of the law with all its multiplicity and variety of precepts, had in view one thing alone —namely, love (see Rom. xiii. 8—10; Gal. v. 14). Nay, it dawns upon him, as it were a bright light, that it was the design

of the law to be observed not only according to the letter, but according to the spirit which lived in it; and that this spirit of the law is the Holy Spirit of God pervading the whole of it, and giving to it a spiritual character (see Rom. vii. 14).

But what must have been the temper of Saul, as the law presented itself to him in this new light? Clearly from the mere circumstance, that the truth of the law had shone upon his soul, Saul did not become a changed person. He was still the same hard, proud, man, who, insensible of and incapable of feeling the noblest and holiest revelations of the Spirit of God that mankind had ever witnessed, carried in his heart and in his hands, against the best and holiest of his own people, death and imprisonment. This man, with the neck of iron (see Isa. xlviii. 4), and the heart of stone (Ezek. xi. 19), is placed face to face with the law of God. So long as he regarded the law as a series of formularies for the outer life, he had been zealous to rule himself by them in all points (Phil. iii. 6). Will he not now also, when the law has been revealed to him to be as the letter of the Spirit of God, subject himself to it, and in the very way of the Spirit? We may readily suppose he did not. The entire relation now assumed a perfectly opposite character. So long as the law had been looked upon by Saul merely in its external aspect, it was to him properly nothing more than a sanction for the shaping of his own self-will, and under the shadow of this pretext had his self-will reached that gigantic force and obduracy before which we start in horror. But it is not so much a new aspect of the law which has now opened on the mind of Saul, but rather the law for the first time appears before him as the word of God. Saul had made him an armour of the veil of the law, and so put it upon his own self-will that it had thereby become invulnerable. The spiritual and divine essence of the law in unapproachable and inviolable majesty, stood now on the one hand; and on the other, his own self-will in all its rigid obduracy and harshness. The relation, however, did not, as such, stand still at this point. The law is a living word (see Acts vii. 38), it pierceth the rigid mass of self-conceit, and the latter feels itself opposed at every point; as oft, however, as he feels the opposition of the law, he awakes up and becomes alive, and struggles against the law; but naturally he gains thereby something beyond the practical confirmation of the

lawlessness of his own nature. This movement of opposition cannot well subside, until the delusion which had previously existed, shall have been entirely removed. Saul had lived on the best understanding with the law; his whole being and life appeared to him to be in the most beautiful harmony with the entire law; under that name, however, an enemy has suddenly started up, and the whole previous tenor of his life and thoughts drives him now to examine whether this enmity now extends to every point as thoroughly as friendship did before. But the experience, that the whole nature of self-will is in all points opposed to the law of God, can not however be the last. For when once the law has been recognized and felt to be the word and the will of the living God, every experience of a contradiction in which one's proper being is involved with the law, must recoil again upon a man's own self to judge and condemn him: and this is the experience of death which pervades every part of our selfish nature.

But we most not lose sight of the fact, that this contest of self-will with the holy will of God, as revealed in the law, which ends with the bitter feeling of death, is not a physical but an ethical process. The end of all opposition between the will of God and the will of man, cannot be any other than the demonstration of the absolute nullity of the latter; death therefore follows as of necessity. But the spiritual essence of man is assuredly nothing less than the capacity to bring into existence before his consciousness, and consequently to raise to a conscious truth, the fact of the contradiction existing between the divine and the human will, and thereby to experience in his conscience the last bitter fruit of this opposition—even death—before it comes into actual existence. But in so far as this experience rests on an act of the will, it is a moral process, and as such must we regard it in Saul's case. The appearance of Jesus to Saul, had for its very first object to arouse him from his perilous delusion, and therefore it had, as we have seen, precisely this shape and nature. But this heavenly manifestation was only the occasion which brought on the internal conflict we have been describing; at every point thereof it was in Saul's power to withdraw from his keen and bitter sufferings. Instead of yielding himself up more fully and more entirely to the influence which the heavenly vision had exercised on him, he had only to lay himself open once more to the impressions of outward

life, so as by their means to be able gradually to overcome and repress the overpowering feelings of this moment. But, as he told Agrippa, he chose the way of obedience to the heavenly revelation, and with it all the difficulty and bitterness which lay there for him, even as it had been foretold (see xxvi. 14). In fact, he now clearly feels that obstinate perseverance in this struggle is nothing less than the kicking of the draught ox against the goad. In this struggle he must give over his own flesh to the sting of death, which is in the law of God, and to the very last thread of life experience and taste that very death.

As soon as we have fully realised these internal processes which went on in the soul, we shall also obtain a clear conception of that which is described to us as lasting for three days after the vision of the Lord. For this silence and deadness for the outer world, what else is it but that state of the body which is perfectly correspondent, and answerable to that struggle of the soul with the law of God which had come upon it like a strong man armed, and to its bitter feelings of death? By dwelling on the external circumstances of Saul's bodily condition, the narrative has thrown a veil over these mysterious, dark, struggles in the soul of Saul, that no profane eye might look upon them; but, for the attentive reader, enough has been intimated to enable him to discern the secret which it shrouds.

An important key to this mystery is given by the allusion which the narrative makes to Saul's state of mind as the end of the three days was drawing nigh. The Lord spoke to Ananias and said, "Go to Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth;" and hath seen in a vision a man, named Ananias, coming in unto him and laying his hand on him that he may receive his sight (ix. 12). "Behold, he prayeth," that is the ground of the Lord's requisition on Ananias; had this reason existed before, Ananias also would have been sooner sent. We see from this that we must not imagine that the mental state of Saul, during these three days, was such as Bengel describes it: "While sight and taste rested, he had recovered himself internally by prayer." Prayer had not been his companion during his struggle; but prayer came at last to refresh the combatant worn to death by the conflict; prayer was not the occupation of the three days; but prayer put an end to the sorrow. But naturally this was not indeed the

first time that Saul had prayed. As a blameless Pharisee, he would not neglect any of the appointed hours of prayer; but hitherto his prayers had not deserved the name; he still stood on the lofty pinnacle of self-justification which he had created for himself, and had drawn God into the depths below that he might misapply His word and law for the strengthening of his own perverted will. But now for the first time his eyes were opened to the chasm that yawned between him and God; for himself he feels that he is lying in the bottom of the abyss; but Jehovah he beholds at the immeasurable height of His Heavenly Holiness. If then he prays, it can only be in faith. The name of Jesus sounding forth from the heavens had, like a stroke of lightning, struck Saul to the earth, and prostrated his whole being; but is not this very name a pledge of salvation, and even of that salvation which, for Saul, is the only redemption? God had made a revelation of himself by Moses, and also by Joshua, which in Greek is Jesus. Saul and his companions had seen in these two names two irreconcilable antagonists. Because Stephen called upon Jesus, he had, they thought, blasphemed Moses, (see vi. 11), and therefore Saul had constrained the Christians to blaspheme Jesus (see xxvi. 11) with the view of doing honour to Moses. But now, how stood the case? Moses the lawgiver has become to Saul the inexorable judge; what then remains in store for him but the despised, blasphemed name of Joshua or Jesus. The salvation which Moses could neither give nor procure, is fulfilled by Joshua. Moses was unable to pass over the Jordan, and to lead in the people unto their inheritance; this must be reserved for Joshua. How! shall not this name, so powerful to save, be sufficient to rescue from his need, and bring to salvation the man who, by the law of Moses, was delivered over unto death? Yes, Stephen indeed, whose death would naturally be constantly present during these three days to the thoughts of Saul (see xxii. 20), in his mortal agony, had called upon this name, and by invoking it, was supplied with a joy such as never before had been witnessed. In this way did the terrors of the name of Jesus gradually assume a shape in the mind of Paul, which inspired him with confidence, and he ventures at last to invoke it.

But what is the meaning of the vision which Saul had seen?

If the first part of the sentence, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest," were as a flash of lightning to Saul, so was the last portion as a thunder-clap. His hatred, his persecution, his deeds of violence against the Christians, now appeared to him a mad offence against the Lord of Heaven himself, and fell with a hundred-fold weight upon his conscience. But if he did not shun the overpowering force of these words, if he ceased not to keep them stedfastly in view, and to ponder them, might he not at last have pierced through these terrors, and have discerned in them a something consolatory and heart-winning? Jesus is the Lord of Heaven; to this truth all the very bones of Saul bear testimony; but this Almighty Being, before whom no flesh can stand, is at the same time so ineffably condescending that He not only takes an interest in the weak, destitute, and helpless band who call upon His name, but He even identifies himself with them. Hereby an actual and positive bridge is made between the man, who is far off from Jesus and has no part in Him, and Jesus who is enthroned and rules in Heaven; for here, on this earth, in this mortal flesh, those move and live, with whom the Lord of Heaven Himself has vouchsafed to acknowledge a communion. If therefore Saul confidingly calls on Jesus in prayer, it must have been the immediate suggestion of humility and simplicity to look for the means of help from the midst of that society which represented Jesus. And accordingly his expectation was answered by the appearance of a vision from the Lord. He sees in the Spirit a man named Ananias coming unto him. This Ananias was a believer in Jesus, dwelling at Damascus; but at the same time having a good report of all the Jews who dwelt there, (see xxii. 12), and who especially was well known as a devout man according to the law. We may well suppose that without doubt, before he started for Damascus, Saul had informed himself of the feelings of the Jews in that city towards the Christian community, and had already heard of this well known and universally respected person. The very name of Ananias, "Jehovah is gracious," is a pledge to him that He who manifests his righteousness and holiness in the law, is also merciful and gracious.

But before we follow Saul along the path of his conversion, and accompany him in his passage from the sphere of inward feelings

into the outer world; let us once more glance back upon this internal struggle while we attempt to bring together those statements in which he himself expresses the attained result, under the light of that greater clearness and certainty which he enjoyed at a later period. Before all other passages that of Rom. vii. 7—25 is of importance in this regard. For our purpose we cannot, it is true, appeal to any undisputed exposition of this passage, but we must make our own way through it; in which however we have this advantage that the striking differences of opinion, which have been advanced in its interpretation, render it an open question, even in the present day, as to the right point of view for understanding it. Let us now attempt the historic course which has been hinted at. But the chief difficulty in this course is presented by the beginning of the Apostle's description, and this is very probably the reason why, in a passage which so clearly refers to definite antecedent circumstances, no attempt has been made to point out those preceding events, for had this attempt been made, we should inevitably have come to the days of the Apostle's conversion. For as the condition of the Apostle, before his conversion, is generally, and, as we have seen, justly considered to have been the legal one, it seems to be a totally senseless course to make the struggle of conversion to be coincident with the beginning of the relation between the Apostle and the law of which he here precisely fixes the commencement (vv. 7, 9). And yet when more carefully examined the case so stands, that just as the Apostle's description carries us back to this point of time, so also the narrative of Luke points to certain of the leading features of the aforesaid description. Let the reader only consider the way in which Paul here speaks of the law. He begins with showing that the law works the knowledge of sin (see ver. vii., comp. iii. 20); now with him, as he expressly asserts, sin is essentially evil concupiscence. But then, if it is an essential function of the law to reveal the fact that evil lust is sin; in that case the law must be regarded not so much after its external forms as after the Spirit that dwells in it. And this view of the law is also maintained in what follows. For the command which awakens all manner of concupiscence (ver. 8) cannot well be one which does not operate on the sentiments. Subsequently the law becomes even holy and spiritual (see

vv. 12, 14); the command is called holy, just, and good (ver. 12). Now, ought we to suppose that Paul ever held any kind of relation to the law in this sense before that Jesus had appeared to him? How could he in truth? It was the very circumstance of his looking upon himself to be blameless as concerning the law that afforded him that unstaggering resolution in his proceedings against the blasphemers of the law: is, then, this law with which he looked upon himself to be in perfect conformity, but the Christians to be irreconcilably opposed to it, the law of God, and not rather the mere letter robbed of its true spirit by the arbitrary interpretations of man? Is it likely that Paul would call this letter the law in the sense above spoken of? Would he not rather, (especially in a passage where he is speaking only of the actual realities and powers of the spiritual life), both regard it and speak of it as nought? Thus does Saul come to the bold and precipitate transition, and suddenly speaks of the time when he was a zealous Pharisee, "I was alive without the law once," in which proposition life, as we see from what follows, does not stand for mere existence, but for an exalted function of life. Admirably does Bengel term this the "*tonus pharisaicus*." Paul thereby characterizes the time, when the law did not rule over him, but rather was in subjection to him, as the zenith of his life in the natural man, and such, I think, we have found him in the midst of his persecuting zeal, which does in fact exhibit such gigantic energy of self-confidence and defiance as with our weak nerves we can scarcely believe to be possible Neander and Philippi (on Rom. vii. 8, 9) are disposed, it is true, to ascribe even to this period the conflict with regard to the law; but they would do well to consider that with this struggle with the law, something more is really meant than the "native hue of resolution sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," and then they may consider whether they can discern and prove any wavering in the haughty resolution and defiant course of the persecutor of the Christians. No: at that time "sin was dead" (ver. 8), for, as it met with no opposition, it could not, in consequence, manifest its true nature and species, for, as Paul says in another place (1 Cor. xv. 56), the strength of sin is the law. But the law which serves as the strength of sin is not the semblance and shadow of the law, but the true

and actual law as God has promulgated it. This law came on Saul for the first time when Jesus of Nazareth manifested himself to him. For "sin revived" says St Paul (ver. 9), "and I died," and in (ver. 11) he describes the way in which this remarkable change took place. The slumbering sin was awakened by the living law standing over against it with its requisitions; but that it should bow before the law is not to be expected, for from whence is to come the will and the power for such submission? This power and this will must be both superior and external to sin; sin, indeed has been, no doubt, the hidden but still the all-ruling principle of the whole life; if, consequently, it should be aroused by any opposition, it will assuredly seek to maintain its authority, and this is even the very delusion which sin exercises over man. While sin, the principle of the life of nature, seeks to maintain itself in opposition to the law, it appears to man to be but doing that which tends to his self-preservation; but inasmuch as the hostility of man to the inviolable law of the living God is thereby realised, every act of this seeming self-preservation and independence is in truth the surrender and abandonment of a man's self unto death. It is a repetition of the first sin in Paradise. Thus, then, following this passage we come again upon that experience of death, whose manifestation is brought before us by the history of the three days. Through sin the law becomes death unto the whole natural life of Saul, a state which he expressly avows Gal. ii. 19, "I through the law am dead." And if now he ascribes a sting to death (1 Cor. xv. 56), and sees the source of this sting in sin which through the law attains strength and the realisation of its ends, are we not by all this referred again to the narrative before us? For, indeed, according to this declaration the law is the positive source of this sting; but whence could Saul have better learned this truth than from his own experience during these three days, which was described to him by the mouth of the Lord himself as the pain of "kicking against the pricks?" If, then, (in vv. 14—24), he still dwells on the particulars of this internal conflict, and appears to describe it as still going on and enduring, we must understand this as implying that this experience of the utter contradictions which in every case end with the triumph of the flesh (ver. 23) had its original seat in that

passage of the life of Paul which was made up of the three days; but that in fact so long as this life in the flesh lasts, the afterthroes of this struggle may again recur. Now just as the description, which Paul here gives us of the commencement of that internal struggle, coincides exactly with the beginning of these three days, so is it also the case with each of their concluding points. The painful result of this inward strife which Paul has here laid before us is the sorrowful cry "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (ver. 24). Along the dark road of this inner struggle had Paul arrived at the knowledge that the hostility to the holy law of God consists not so much in individual actions, or in any series of actions, as essentially in this that the body which, from the beginning, was designed to serve and to obey, has obtained the mastery —that the flesh, which forms the periphery, is made the centre (vv. 14, 18), and consequently has become the power which rules the whole man, and has usurped the internal authority which belongs to the holy law of God. By this means the consciousness of the antagonism has reached its height; the law of God stands without the man; the law in his members rules the whole man in opposition to the law of God; thereupon the consciousness of the divine law works nothing else than the foretaste of that death to which is consigned the whole bodily organisation of the σῶμα, although created originally by God to live, and with it the whole man is taken captive by the law in his members. If the sorrowful question "who shall deliver" should receive no answer, the eternal night of death must come on. If, then, the Apostle forthwith proceeds to thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord, why, we know that according to the universal law of the divine economy of salvation (see Ps. l. 15) prayer must come in between the feeling of trouble and the word of thanks. Here then the narrative before us comes in to supply what is wanting with the words "Behold he prayeth."

When we proceed to follow the further course of this narrative, we must first of all take a view of all that concerns Saul's personal condition, for then we shall be better able to understand whatever relates to his call. The arrival of Ananias, whom Saul had seen in the vision, had for its primary object to recover him from his blindness (ver. 12). As his blindness was originally the

natural result of the light which he had seen from Heaven (see xxii. 11), and afterwards the effect of the inward, mortal, consequences of this manifestation, so the delivering from this visitation is a pledge to him of his being freed from that retributive power which from that manifestation had passed upon him. This, therefore, is the first thing that Ananias on his arrival brings before his mind as he lays his hands upon him (ver. 17). But when Ananias expressly said that the Lord Jesus had sent him, Saul could not fail to observe how the same that had wounded was now healing him, and how He that killed now made him alive again —as he knew it was written of Jehovah (see Deut. xxxii. 39). And when Ananias laid his hands upon him, and thereby restores his sight, Saul learnt by experience that the miraculous powers of the Lord are imparted to His Church ; because, as he had been taught by the address, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," He dwells in and rules the Church. Thus, then, in that body of his in which he had felt so bitterly the working and the principle of death, his twofold horror is transmuted into a twofold experience of salvation. But just as his blindness was merely a sign and effect of death, so on the other hand, the recovery of his sight is not properly life and salvation, but only a promise of it. It was not only the restoration of his sight, however, that Ananias had promised to Saul, but also the being filled with the Holy Ghost (ver. 17). And as his sight was restored to him by the laying on of Ananias' hands, so the filling with the Holy Ghost is imparted in baptism, to which Ananias invites the now-seeing Saul, with the words, "and now why tarriest thou ? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." According to the narrative in ix. 18, the baptism of Saul followed immediately after the recovering of his sight, for it is not until he has been baptized that he took meat and was strengthened.

With good reason does Ananias look upon all instruction and preparation for his baptism to be superfluous. In this case an understanding of baptism in the name of Jesus has been prepared in a way such as never before had been, and as will never again recur. Let us enter once more into the depths of the soul of Saul and we shall find that all his sorrow and suffering centres around the one desire to be freed from that body of sin and

death, with which he has not only been joined by the hand of God, but to which he has himself subjected both his whole will and his whole being. He desires that, therefore, which in the sphere of nature cannot find its fulfilment; but baptism, which has not its origin in that sphere, vouchsafes to him in full and overflowing measure that after which his inmost longings are directed. Upon calling upon that holy name his body of sin and death is baptized into the name of Jesus by means of the water poured upon him. How, at that juncture, could Paul have failed to understand that by means of that act it was intended that he should be placed in communion with Jesus Christ? Would he not now, by the light of his own immediate experience, begin to understand the death of Jesus? What else was it that was declared by that death, if it was not the fearful majesty of the righteousness of God, which until then had never been set forth in all its awfulness? (see Rom. iii. 25—26) What else had the Lord felt in his agony and passion, if it was not the death-sting of the Law? And yet, in truth, he was the Just One, as Saul had heard from the mouth of Stephen (see 7. 52, cf. 22, 14); if therefore He really permitted the death of the wrath of God to pass upon Himself in all its terrors, such as the law against sin ordains, He can only have endured it out of his free love to others. And what this love means Saul forthwith understood as baptism passed upon his trembling soul. What else indeed can be signified by that communion and fellowship, to which baptism in the name of Jesus points than that Jesus had in full reality, suffered that present death, whose bitter foretaste Saul had so deeply experienced, and that, inasmuch as Saul's body of sin and death has been admitted into actual communion with the body of Jesus which had been offered as a sacrifice for sin on the Cross, that presentiment of death which Saul had passed through was to be looked upon as its actual death, so that even if by reason of this communion in the actual death of Jesus he should once more experience the whole of its bitter pain, he may know that he is supported by Him who by His appearance unto him had brought him into this conflict. By this fellowship in the mortal agony of Christ, the suffering of death undergone by Saul, though in and by itself it was unfruitful and of no avail, attained to a real end and to good fruit. For if, by

virtue of his communion with the sufferings of Jesus unto death the sinner looks upon himself as dead—then neither sin, nor the law, the strength of sin, nor death, the effect of sin—then not one of these three horrors possesses either right or power over him (see Rom. vi. 7). Consequently, although a man has still to abide for a while in this body of sin and death, he is yet no longer involved in the death of that body ; he knows that he is dead with Christ, and thereby justified from sin ; and if he is at last to quit this body of sin and death, that indeed is the consequence of a previous sin, which, however, through that communion with Christ, which, by means of baptism, is bestowed upon men, has acquired a different signification from all that it had before. For, as in baptism, since man is not only dipped into the water, but also comes up again, the fellowship so signified is not merely a fellowship of humiliation, but also of exaltation—not alone a communion of death and the grave, but a communion likewise of resurrection and ascension.

Such must St Paul, by experience, have found baptism, and it is as such that it is set forth to us in the Apostle's teaching, when as in Gal. iii. 7, he calls baptism a putting on of Christ. How forcibly does this remind us of that moment preceding the baptism of Saul, when he was so weary with this natural clothing (see 2 Cor. v. 2—4) that he would not if possible wish to remain therein one instant longer. And then also it is duly to be considered that in both of those two important paragraphs (Rom. vi. 3, 11 and vii. 1—6) he throughout proceeds on the supposition of an actual death having been undergone in the case of Christians.

His baptism, therefore, is the great turning-point in the life of Saul. As his introduction into the community of Christians it is on the one hand the completion of that death of the old man, which is felt and experienced in the struggle with the law, and in the other it is the birth of the new man. We now propose to inquire what was the destination which the Lord enjoins on the man thus extraordinarily awakened and converted. Even though it be assumed, as certainly it would appear from xxvi. 16, 18, that the Lord at his first appearance immediately announced to him that he was called to a special work in His service, still we must maintain that the personal matter—the question of life and

death—that for the three days had such entire possession of Saul's mind and feelings, that that part of his Lord's address had but little effect upon him; unless, perhaps, at most, it assisted in smoothing the way of conversion to his first trust in the Lord. It was on this account, probably, that Luke did not hold it necessary to record the intimation of his call in the first speech of the Lord. In any case this more particular charge first clearly occurred to his thoughts, when, after he had obtained some repose, it was brought home to his mind by the mouth of Ananias. This, therefore, is the fittest place for examining its import. The call of Saul is comprised in the one expression that he was designed to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ. This is the purport of the words of the Lord to Ananias (ix. 15, xxii. 15) and we also find the word itself (ἐγώ σε ἀποστέλλω) in our Lord's speech to Saul (xxii. 17). But now an Apostle is one sent by the Lord for the purpose of testifying, from his own immediate experience, the presence of the Lord (see John xv. 27; Acts i. 8, 21, 22; iv. 20). This character continues to subsist even in the Apostolate of St Paul, as is expressly asserted in xxii. 15; and xxvi. 16. But now the original Apostles derived their testimony from their intercourse with Jesus; but whence is Saul to draw his? Since then, in both the places where mention is made of Saul's qualifications as an Apostolic witness, the principal stress is laid upon his perception of Him that had already been vouchsafed to his eye as well as to his ear, we infer that the Lord did not appear to him merely with the view to his receiving his call to the Apostolate as directly from Himself as the rest had (see Gal. i. 1), but also for the purpose of imparting to him, during His immediate manifestation and discourse, the summary of His history and revelation. He appears to him as the Lord from heaven (1 Cor. xiii. 47), and thereby the identity of Jesus with the God of the Old Testament dawns on the mind of Saul, and thereon also rests his conviction of the eternal Godhead of Jesus and His relation to the whole world as its Creator (Col. i. 15, 17). But he hears also from out of the mouth of His "Lord from Heaven" the name of the well-known "Nazarene," as also He showed Himself to him in the form in which He had ascended up to Heaven, that is, in the form of man. And this refers him back to the human person and to the earthly history of the Lord. This history and this

person Saul had hitherto held in abomination as an offence against the law. All this takes another shape now; he the very one, whom even the whisper of a doubt of his own righteousness had never reached, now feels himself in his inmost soul to be the chief of sinners (1 Tim. i. 15; Eph. iii. 8). But since, at the same time, it becomes evident to him that the natural will of man, the self-will of the flesh, is the principle and source of sin, he discerns also at the same moment that the unrighteousness of the whole family of mankind is dependent on this principle of nature and of the flesh, and then at last upon this dark background Jesus rises in glory before him as the only one who has fulfilled the law of God—as the only "Just One" (see xxii. 14; vii. 52)—as the model man—(1 Tim. ii. 5)—as the counterpart of the first Adam (see Rom. v. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 45). This experience and this view of his own unrighteousness, and that of the whole human race, as well as that of righteousness alone in Jesus Christ, is the centre of the whole of St Paul's teaching. For as Jesus is called and is the only Just One, and all the unjust are given over to death and damnation, therefore Jesus, by His righteousness, will bring salvation and redemption. His righteousness itself will be salvation. And since it is God that sent Jesus Christ, therefore, (to speak with regard to the first cause of all salvation and all redemption), the righteousness of Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God—that is, the righteousness which He gives and imputes (see δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, Rom. i. 17).

But just as, by His manifestation, Jesus Christ shewed Himself to Saul, both in His person and in His saving power for every individual, so also in that immediate experience did the essential character of the Church become known unto him. "Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." So runs the voice which Saul heard immediately from the mouth of the Lord Himself (cf. xxii. 14). Perfectly just is the remark which occurs in the treatise "Gedanken über das Apostelamt des Paulus, Düsseldorf 1851," where it is said, p. 16, "Paul beheld the glorified Jesus, and he learned the mystery of the union between the Lord and His Church in the answer which Jesus gave to his question "Who art thou Lord!" Saul was persecuting the Church, and the head of the Church said to him "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." To these prepara-

tory and fundamental words of the Lord we must further add his own immediate experience, when, in the address, in the imposition of the hands, and in the baptism of Ananias, the Lord Himself was actually imparted to Saul for the mortification of the old, as also for the creation of the new man. This seeing and hearing, this direct experience in the holiest moments of his existence, is the cause why Saul sets forth beyond all the other Apostles the significance and importance of the Church (see Rothe. Anfänge der Kirche. S. 282. 286. 297).

We see then that the Apostolical vocation of St Paul possesses a similar originality and the like import with that of the twelve original Apostles. Were, however, this mission of Saul in every respect identical with theirs, it would have seemed superfluous, and absolutely it would never have been called into existence. The difference consists in the different direction which is assigned to the mission of St Paul. Whereas the twelve were called primarily for Israel, Paul is to be sent pre-eminently to the Gentiles (ix. 15; xxvi. 17; xxii. 15). This distinction in the Apostolical office of Saul is by no means an arbitrary one, but founded on the very history of his call. It is founded as well on the different positions of the Lord who called them, as also on the different positions of the men who were called. We have seen that it is the Lord who, in the one case and in the other, alike calls to the Apostolic office; but at the time that He called the twelve he was tabernacling in the humility and weakness of the flesh, belonging to the people of His descent after the flesh and to the land of His nativity. When, however, He called Saul, He appeared, it is true, in a bodily form, but yet in a heavenly and a spiritual body. While the Lord dwelt in the weakness of the flesh, He turned first of all to the Jews, but in His spiritual and glorified state He directs himself to all men, and so He calls Saul to be His witness unto all men (xxii. 15; cf. Delitsch in Rudelbach's und Guericke's Zeitschrift 1849 p. 606). But the reason why in this glorified state the Lord pre-eminently directs his attention to the Gentiles, lies in the fact, that it was the malice of the Jews that had brought about the change of the Lord from the condition of the flesh into that of the Spirit. That, consequently, which in the history of Jonas occurs as a token—viz. the three days passage through the deep from Israel

to the Gentiles—has here its historical substantiation. When, through Israel's treachery, the Lord had lain for three days and three nights in the depths of the earth, He withdrew from this people in order, after a brief invisible labour of love and blessing, to turn to the Gentiles, to gather out of them a chosen flock (see Acts iii. 26; Rom. xi. 5). But whereas Jonah, after his passage through the depths of the sea, preached himself to the men of Nineveh; in this case all that was possible was that Jesus, exalted to the right hand of God, should send a messenger in His stead (see 2 Cor v. 20), and this ambassador and representative of Jesus when He turned to the Gentiles, is St Paul; so that the Apostolical office of Paul forms even the accomplishment of that portion of the prophetic history of Jonas which concerns his ministry among the Ninevites.

And we arrive at the same result, when we examine more closely the individual circumstances of the person thus called. He is "a chosen vessel" (ix. 15); chosen out of the people and out of the Gentiles (xxvi. 17). And this of course implies the idea, that as an ambassador to the Gentiles was required, it was possible to select him from among the Gentiles. And this possibility puts aside Meyer's objection to such an interpretation of this passage. Now, although it was possible for the choice to have been made from among the Heathen, yet the Apostle of the Gentiles was selected from out of the Jews, because it was in that nation that the normal preparation of the whole human race for salvation had been effected, and the Apostle, whose office it was to found and to guide the beginnings of the kingdom of God in the midst of the kingdoms of the world must above all things possess a normal conscience (see Gal. i. 15; Rom. i. 2). But on the other hand, the history of Jonah had shown how difficult, nay, how impossible, it was for an Israelite to quit Jerusalem with a message of salvation, and go to Nineveh. Jonas could not make up his mind to start on his journey, and to perform his embassy until he had been three days and three nights in the deep; and there he was fain to come to the humiliating reflexion, "I am cast out of the sight of God;" then, however, when his soul fainted within him, "he remembered the Lord," and "he prayed from out of the deep, and his prayer came in unto Him, even into His holy temple" (Jonah ii. 1—8).

But even after Jonah had passed through the deep, he could not endure the office of a prophet to the Ninevites in a due and becoming manner. His soul was too narrow to comprehend the infinite mercy and grace of Jehovah. It was manifest that, although Jonah had passed through the deep, he had come to the light again unchanged. He, therefore who, taken from among the people of Israel was to be truly the Apostle of the Gentiles, must indeed pass through the deep; but he must rise to the surface an altered man. From this point of view, a new light breaks upon us with regard to the mystery of these three days in the life of Saul. The depths into which during these three days, he was to be plunged, were such that, as regarded his ordinary human nature, he must feel and acknowledge himself to be subject to the power of sin and death, and in this very recognition of the universal corruption of human nature he must experimentally learn, how all the pre-eminence that Israel possessed above the heathen, was insufficient to cure this corruption—how even the law, that crown of all Israel's prerogatives (see Ps. cxlvii. 19—20), only served to show the more distinctly this corruption in all its profundity. But when, by calling upon the name of Jesus, and by incorporation into His Church by means of baptism, he had been rescued from the depths of this despair of the righteousness, and of the redemption of man's nature and species, and when thereby he was made a new creature; then was he rendered capable of taking up, and of bearing that burthen which was too heavy for the shoulders of Jonah. The prerogative of Israel has no disturbing effect on his mind, for he has seen and felt that this corruption of human nature is universal, and he knows that the law given to Israel far from bettering had only made it worse. Neither does the unrighteousness of the Gentiles, and the fact that they are without a law, deter him. For he has learned that the means of salvation are within the reach of all—even the calling on the name of the Lord, who dwells in Heaven, whose mercy like the vault of Heaven, or the purifying water which is spread over the face of the whole earth, embraces alike all nations, and kindreds, and lands.

Now, although by this peculiar guidance he was qualified to publish to the Gentiles the Gospel of the salvation of Christ, and even if Israel persevered in its obduracy, still from the very first

the prospect had been opened out to him, that his Apostleship will not be without significance for Israel; only the order previously observed is inverted. For we are told in (ix. 15) that he had been chosen "to bear the name of Jesus before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." But by this nothing more can surely be meant than the succession and order of his labours, in general and on the whole, as indeed is clearly implied by the mention there made of kings. Already, by the preaching of Philip among the heathen, both far and near, had it been brought to pass (see chap. viii.) that at the very time when Israel shut his heart against the Gospel, a peculiar readiness to receive it was awakened among the Gentiles, which indeed was not as closely confined to the multitude as was at first the case at Jerusalem, but it embraced also the powerful and the influential. If, then, we are here told that the name of Jesus is to be carried to nations and to kings, it is thereby clearly indicated that the preaching of the Gospel among the heathen would affect and modify the whole organisation of their national sins and social existence. And herein also is contained in fulfilment of the ancient prophecy of Moses the last stimulus and means for the awakening of Israel. If God makes known the mystery of His grace and power to those who are not a people, this is designed to arouse and to revive the zeal of His people Israel, who for a while had been given over to their own imaginations (see Deut. vii. 32, 21). Even though, therefore, Israel may be hardened and obdurate, still the promises of Israel cannot as yet be at an end. Saul had indeed heard the dying martyr pray that the blood-guiltiness of his people, crying as it did from earth to Heaven, might nevertheless be forgiven them; and was not his own conversion the very first result of such an intercession of the martyr? and was not the bowing of his own iron neck, and the melting of his stony heart an earnest that, by the omnipotent grace of Jesus, this stiff-necked people could also be changed (cf. 1 Tim. i. 13, 16). For, this purpose, the means, so long since spoken of by Moses, now at length present themselves. Considered therefore by the light of these words of the Lord to him, his mission unto the Gentiles, must to the mind of Saul have always carried an ulterior reference to Israel, and it is thus that we even find St Paul thinking and expressing himself on this point. (See Rom. xi. 13, 14, 25, 26.)

There still remains for consideration an expression of the Lord with regard to the call of Saul to be His Apostle, which stands in immediate agreement with that prospect and hope for Israel which has been just advanced. "For" the Lord, immediately after his words, pointing out the order of his Apostolical labours, goes on to say "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (see ix. 16). Now, the causal particle which brings in this clause has been either totally disregarded, as by Kühnöl, or the connection has been placed as by Olshausen in a thought which is not to be derived from the context. In any case it is clear that the connection between the "bearing the name," and the necessity of "suffering many things," for that name's sake is not immediately obvious. If I do not greatly err, the connecting link lies in the peculiar character of that Apostleship which is here created. This Apostle was the only one whose call was not a public fact, but a mystery. In the presence of the believers, he could not appeal to tradition; nay, even when standing before peoples and kings, he would have absolutely nothing to which he could appeal; how then, both within and without the Church, was he to prove his title as an Apostle of Jesus Christ? There is no more convincing proof than suffering. If the name of Jesus which he bears is a burden which presses the Old Man to the earth and kills him, and if Saul yet continues to bear this burden, and yet presses on to the end, an irresistible testimony is thereby furnished that it was not from any mere impulse of his own that he undertook this work but at the command of the Lord, whose strength is even made perfect in human weakness (2 Cor. xii. 9).

Now, with this view of this new Apostolate thus committed to Saul, coincides all that we are told in the next place of his labours and proceedings (ix. 15—30). If, as Neander and Wieseler and Meyer suppose, we have already in this section the beginning of Saul's Apostolical career, we might then leave it in the present place without further consideration; but for my part I cannot help thinking that, in all that is here related to us, we have to recognise the description of Saul the convert, not of Saul the Apostle. His going into the synagogues, and mightily convincing his hearers that Jesus is the Christ (see vv. 19—22) is by no means the sign of an Apostle (see Acts xviii. 24—28).

But when, from Gal. i. 17, we discover that, after his flight from Damascus, Saul proceeded to Arabia, we cannot, merely from that statement, infer that he there made it his business to preach Christ, especially as Barnabas has nothing to say about any thing of the kind (see ver. 27). Those probably are right who look upon Saul's residence in Arabia as a period of calm retirement, during which he lived in a spiritual communion with the Lord in heaven, similar to the intercourse which the original Apostles had enjoyed with the Lord on earth. If after this retirement he returns to Damascus (see ver. 23; Wieseler's Chronologie des Apostolischen Zeitalters S. 142, 143), we see that he invariably seeks to attach himself to that which lies nearest at hand. Driven thence once more, he then for the first time returns to Jerusalem; and now that all his inward convictions are fully established, he sees for the first time the Apostles to whom he is introduced by Barnabas. But how far he was from exercising even at this time his Apostolical office, we see from those instructions of the Lord, which, during his present residence at Jerusalem, were vouchsafed to him in the Temple (see xxii. 17—21). For to the Lord who commanded him to leave Jerusalem, he replies that he was most peculiarly fitted to labour for the conversion of his own countrymen, whereupon the Lord distinctly enjoins him to go far thence. If in ix. 29, 30, the murderous design of the Hellenists against him is alleged as the cause of his departure from Jerusalem, there is nothing in the statement contradictory to the injunction of the Lord above alluded to, for the reason which the Lord there gives for his removal to a distance, is that the Jews would not receive his testimony. And if even now Saul does not at once enter upon the field of his Apostolical labours, but betakes himself to his paternal city of Tarsus, the reason of this is still the same—that, namely, this sacred and miraculous commencement of a new life and a new Apostleship, must, first of all, elaborate and perfect itself internally until the Lord Himself should bring about the moment, when furnished with the seal of its divine origin, it should come forth into the light, and bewray itself beyond gainsaying to all, both Jews and Gentiles, who would not obstinately shut their hearts against it.

§ XVII. THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN JUDEA.

(Chap. x. 1—7).

It is undeniable, that negatively, as well as positively, a great change has been preparing in the history of the Church. The hostility of the Jews to the chosen witnesses of Christ, has reached a high pitch; and the issue which threatens, is the utter hardening of the hearts of the whole people against the gospel; on the other hand, the Gentiles, exhibit very evident signs of their hearts having been opened—by the mediation of Judaism, it is true—for the reception of the Gospel; and both the narratives we have recently been considering, introduce us into a sacred mysterious laboratory, wherein a chosen instrument for carrying the holy name into all the lands of the heathen is being prepared in perfect quietude by the Lord in heaven. We have also already received intimations that this new course of things is destined to push into the back-ground all those initiatory developments which had previously shaped themselves. And if, before this, the tarrying of the Apostles in Jerusalem has appeared a remarkable sign, we now know from the report of the conversion and call of Saul of Tarsus, that in fact a new Apostolate has been created for the very purpose of founding the Church among the Gentiles, while the twelve Apostles are intended to be left to their original destination. And if our interpretation of the order assigned in ix. 15 for the diffusion and knowledge of the name of Christ, is correct, then there is already contained therein an intimation, that the Church which had been gathered from among the Jews, would in such wise dwindle away and disappear, that for Israel there would be no escape, but through those very Gentiles who had been adopted into the Church—in a word, that the Jewish Church of the beginning would be forced to give place altogether to the Gentile Church of progress, and consequently that the hope of Israel could only attain to its consummation by the means of the Gentiles. And were there not many significant facts in the history of Israel, as contained in the Old Testament, which pointed to such a new course of things? For where was the blessing and the presence of Jehovah, when Joseph had been betrayed

by his brethren and sold to strangers? Assuredly not in Shechem, where the brethren of Joseph, with sin-stricken consciences, were tending their flocks, nor yet in Hebron, where Jacob was weeping and mourning, until his grey hairs were brought with sorrow to the dust. Have they—both Jacob and his sons—even provision for themselves or for their cattle? The blessing and presence of Jehovah are withdrawn from Jacob and his house, and they dwell with Joseph alone. The latter, however, has drawn inwards whatever was distinctive of his Israelitish character; outwardly he appears as an Egyptian. Whereas in his father's house his virtues and his gifts had brought upon him nothing but envy and hatred; in a distant and a heathen land, he has won all hearts, and become the governor of the country; he has married there, and got him a family, and forgotten his father's house and his home (Genesis xli 51). On this Joseph, however, who had thus gone into the very midst of heathendom, and was there exercising a reformatory influence, rests all the future and all the hopes of redemption of the house of Israel. It is on this account that the history turns away entirely from the eleven sons and the father, in order to occupy itself exclusively with Joseph, and to shew in detail, how from slavery and from the gaol he rose to lordship and a throne. Further, was not Moses, the redeemer and mediator of Israel, brought up and maintained by the daughter of the king of Egypt? Was he not educated at the Egyptian court, and instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians (see vii. 22), in order to be fitted for his future destination and office? And was it not precisely when he had fled from his people, and had buried himself among the Midianites in the wilderness, that he was called to this work and ministry? Lastly, where was the salvation of Israel, when the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah were given over into the hands of the heathen, and were carried away into captivity? Was not the restoration of Israel—that upon which all their hopes rested—committed to the charge of the heathen monarch Cyrus? These facts of the Old Testament, combined with the declarations of Jesus Christ, as to the course which the kingdom of God was to follow, and with the events which had taken place in the early Church, were calculated to suggest, and necessarily did awaken a conception of the degree of forgetfulness and obscurity to which the beginning of the Church in Israel might be possibly reduced. We,

for our part, most early attain to a clear conception of this fact when we call to mind how men have so entirely and so greatly misconceived a moment of such urgent pressure in the Apostolical Church, and still continue to misunderstand it, that the goad of a negative and destructive criticism was needed as it still is, even in the midst of a recognition of the marvellous history of the beginnings of the Christian Church, to awaken and to stimulate a conscious notice of this knot in its development. But so soon as we really feel that the stadium which the Church is now running, does not remount to its initiatory limits, but that the Church of the Gentiles was even preceded by the Church of the Jews, the necessity arises upon our minds of our regarding this, so to speak, newly-discovered Jewish Church in its abiding significance, or rather of maintaining and insisting upon the acknowledged and established importance of the events of the day of Pentecost, of the Church in Jerusalem, and of the twelve Apostles, although we cannot but acknowledge, that between our present condition and those beginnings, there is, in its development a great difficulty to be unravelled.

This necessity is met by the present section. Before the significant but silent preparations for a new stadium in the development of the Church are carried any further, a general review is given us of the several communities throughout the land of Judea which, since the scattering abroad, had arisen out of that of Jerusalem (see viii. 1). And this is done in order that in the later Church of the Gentiles no one should suppose that these beginnings of the Jewish Church were to be little regarded. We here see (ver. 31) that in all three of the chief provinces of the land of the Jews—Samaria being named last in the enumeration because such a position is naturally the only allowable one to the Jewish point of view—Christian communities were everywhere diffused. On the other hand this is a proof of the fruitful power of the preaching which proceeded from the dispersed members of the community at Jerusalem (see viii. 1—4), and on the other of a still existing disposition among the Jews for its reception. Now of these Churches of Judea gathered, without exception, from among the Jews, we are told "they had rest." From the context it is clear that this statement applies only to their outward condition—the Churches had rest from persecution; for the most

violent of their persecutors and oppressors has been brought to a stand by One still more powerful. The ends to which this peace and this repose were subservient, are indicated by two participial expressions. First of all this rest was serviceable for the edification of the Churches. They were grounded and builded up as one body, for they are the building and the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19), and the House of God (1 Tim. iii. 15). For the progressive edification both of the Churches and of the individual Christians does not by any means exclude that first original building by God and the Holy Ghost. For it is the constant, spontaneous appropriation of this divine foundation on the part of the individual members and of the Churches (cf. Eph. ii. 21). Consequently the declaration in this passage that the Jewish Churches were edified is intended to show us, that they employed this period of external repose in strengthening and establishing themselves in their divine principles and eternal character in order to allow that foundation which had been laid in them by the Holy Ghost to expand and develope itself freely. Further, we are told of the Christians during this state of rest, that "they walked in the fear of the Lord." They well knew that in his sermon on the day of Pentecost Peter had pointed to the great and terrible day of the Lord; they had learned also from the same discourse that with the day of Pentecost, "the last days" whose close was to bring with it the dissolution of the heavens and the earth, had already dawned upon them; they felt, moreover, that by their whole outward existence they were still involved and mixed up with the present order of things in the world. How then, was it possible for them to be at peace even in this present state of repose which had fallen upon them? Even because they looked not to the visible but to the invisible; because they feared not man who could kill their body only, but the Lord who can destroy both body and soul in hell. This precisely is the reason why this state of rest is no hindrance but rather a furtherance of their edification. But in order that no one should entertain the opinion that because of this fear of the Lord these communities were totally devoid of that original joy and serenity which had been the privilege of the Church of Jerusalem (see ii. 46—47), it is added in an express clause, that they were all filled with the comforting consolations of the Holy Spirit. These commu-

nities had even the actual experience of that which the Lord had promised to His disciples beforehand. He would go away from them and nothing would remain for them but to wait in hope for His coming again, and in the mean time He would send One to them who should by His ineffable consolations make up to them all that they lost by the removal of His bodily presence (see John xiv. 16; xvi. 16). The Churches in the land of Judea walked in the fear of the Lord; they walked in a full consciousness of the vast gulf which was fixed between themselves, who still dwell on the earth in the body of the flesh, and their Lord who with His spiritual body reigned in heaven; in the meantime, however, they have the fulness of joy through the comfort of the Holy Ghost who is within them.

In these ever memorable words is the state of the Churches of Judea described to us. Can we reasonably hope to say the same of the Gentile Christians, when once the goad of their persecutor shall be broken? For as regards the comparison which Justin Martyr draws between the Jewish and the Gentile Christians, and which he decides in favour of the latter, it cannot affect the present question. For, in the first place, the Jewish Christians of the second century are decidedly different from those of the first; and secondly, in the time of Justin Martyr, that peace which, as we have seen, had generally so good an influence on the Jewish Churches, had not yet fallen to the lot of the Gentile believers. Indeed, we know that, very far from this being the case, the very contrary is asserted of the latter. When the times of bloody persecution were over, and the Churches in the lands of the Gentiles at last found rest, they were indeed built up, but not on the everlasting foundations of the Spirit—but out of the perishable elements of this world—wood and stone. They believed not that they must walk in the same way as before—in the fear of the Lord; they falsely deemed that the Lord had once more descended from on High and established His Kingdom of Peace upon the earth. On this account, too, the consolations of the Holy Spirit appeared to be less necessary to them: for from the lord even of this world, they could condescend to receive the good things and the honours of the earth both for maintenance and for splendour, and they borrowed and appropriated the sword and shield of the kingdoms of this world, for defence and also for attack.

But St Luke does not content himself merely with the dis-

cription of these communities : he brings before us two facts of individual history in order to detain our attention the longer on this evanescent condition and locality of the Church. The communities of Palestine which were thus at rest and thus flourished in majestic prosperity, were situated around Jerusalem, which they regarded as their spiritual centre ; for there it was that the twelve Apostles dwelt, surrounded by the Churches of the first fruits. It is this connexion which St Luke desires to point out when (in ver. 32) he tells us that St Peter set out to pass through all the Churches of Palestine. Accordingly, we accompany the Apostle into regions of which the Old Testament History has nothing pleasing to relate—the regions of the sea coast where the Philistines had their settlements. But now all that is told us of the labours of Peter in these quarters, are deeds not of stern retribution and discipline, but deeds of compassion and wonder-working love. We must once more make the remark that in these holy communities all was in such good order and discipline that the Apostle's overlooking eye could find nothing that was an offence, but that wherever he went he had only to bless. This work of love which by means of His Church the Lord performed upon His obdurate people Israel, is not, moreover, entirely without effect. For all that dwelt at Lydda, and in the neighbouring place of Saron, turned unto the Lord (ver. 35).

From the community of Joppa a picture of life is next presented to us—that of Tabitha, or as her Aramean name is expressed in Greek—that of Dorcas (ver 36). It is the first female name of which mention is made in the history of the Church ; and it is evidently intended that, in her instance, we should see what the Spirit of the Lord brings about even by means of the female sex. As her name is dwelt upon with such special emphasis, we must, without doubt, see in it a reference to her beauty and loveliness. But this external advantage is, however, merely noticed with a view to make us see therein an allusion to her inward excellence. That her personal beauty, merely as such, does not by any means come into consideration in this place, we are, it is plain, to infer from the fact that poor widows form her immediate circle (ver. 39). For since no one is pointed out as specially mourning for her death, we must suppose her to have stood alone in the world.

One would have thought that this trait was sufficiently indi-

vidual and personal; and yet Baur, by a wretched expenditure of historical and philological sciolism, would make us believe that the narrative before us is nothing more than a legendary repetition of the myth, as he calls it, set forth in Mark v. 35—43. There it is, the twelve years' old daughter who is taken from her father, here it is a Christian woman living and dying without relations, and yet he says both must be one and the same story. And why? Why, because Jesus says *Θαλιθα*, and Peter calls her *Θαβιθα*; the two words not only have nearly the same sound, but they also have the same meaning, for he argues *Ταβιθα*, in Syriac, טַבִיתָא (it would be written ܛܒܝܬܐ) signifies in general "Maiden" (see Apostel Paulus S. 193.) One even who knows nothing of Syriac, will yet easily understand that it is hardly possible that a lady should bear a name which properly signified "Maiden."

Now as regards the fruits which the Spirit of Christ had matured from this lovely and solitary maiden in the midst of the community at Antioch, we are told by Luke: "she was full of good works and alms-deeds that she did." Good works, and especially alms-giving, are, it is true, mere outward things; as soon as they have been performed they acquire an independent and an external existence; and yet St Luke says of Tabitha: she was full of good works and alms; as if the outward things had still continued to adhere and cling to her. We cannot but see therein an allusion to the nature of such good works and alms deeds. The writer intends to intimate, that what is essential in them is even the soul that had inspired and animated them (cf. Col. iii.—23) that, so to speak, all her good works were not so much matter and body as rather life and spirit. It is only in this sense that these external things can be spoken of as dwelling in and clinging to their author. They are intended to be represented as works which cannot be separated from the man, but which would attend him even through the gates of death (cf. Rev. xiv. 13). And it is consequently by this view that the perfectly extraordinary result of this benevolence becomes explicable. The maiden falls sick and dies. It is now seen, that she, the lonely one, has by that love of Christ, which pervaded and animated her every action, won for herself a love and sympathy which could not be surpassed had she been the mother of the whole community. It was the Christian voice of the dis-

ciples who send the men to Joppa, where Peter is staying (ver. 38) ; but before all others it is the poor widows, whom, by the work of her own hands, Tabitha had provided with coats and other garments. These were they who thronged around Peter in the Upper Chamber where the body of Tabitha lay, and could not refrain from shewing him the work of Tabitha in the clothes they wore. The summons to Peter evidently had its origin in the wish and the hope that the Apostle might perchance restore the beloved lady to life again. No instance of a resuscitation to life had indeed as yet occurred in the Apostolic Church ; whether therefore Peter would comply with such a wish they did not at all know ; they do not venture even to give direct utterance to their wish. From all these circumstances, however, we perceive only the more distinctly how great was the universal regret for the death of this young maiden ; and how great, therefore, on the one hand must her love have been, and on the other, how pure must have been the susceptibility of the community for all such exercise of love and charity.

And now Tabitha sleeps in her Lord, and her works do follow her. For her it would be well to continue in that rest. But since the whole community is inflamed with such affectionate longing for her, the heart of Peter is moved, and in the confidence of faith he utters the words " Tabitha, arise !" and calling the saints and widows, he presents her to them alive. This is the second instance of death that is recorded in the history of the first community of Christians. The first was so surrounded with heavenly joy and glory that all its terrors were swallowed up thereby ; in the second, however, death takes its natural course ; but showing itself overcome by the love of Christ it is entirely annulled by the power of Christ.

Such is the picture that is presented unto us of the Churches of Palestine. They walked in holy fear and joy, and grew more and more unto the measure of the perfection that it was appointed unto them to fulfil. The sacred fire of love burns brightly amidst them, and seizes on and animates all that otherwise would stand side by side, in coldness and death. And through these seats of fear and love the Lord still walks with His omnipotent and miraculous powers, which overcome and destroy both sickness and death. If, therefore, at a later period, a nobler development and

form of the Church was destined to spring up, we ought never to forget the blessed beginning, from which the subsequent maturity issued, the holy though hidden root, from which the visible tree of the Church which now fills the whole earth, has grown up. And if the venerable forms of the Apostles, around whom these churches were fostered, were destined to retire from the scene, and betake themselves to comparative inactivity, and we behold another coming forward in the midst; still we must cherish the conviction that this is not to be ascribed to any weakness or imperfection on their part, but rather acknowledge that these chosen instruments of the Lord are not less great in rest than at work, in silence than in speech, in suffering than in doing,—that in all the Lord alone is and ever will be great.

§ 18. THE FIRST FRUITS OF THE GENTILES.

(Chap. x. 1—xi. 18.)

If this condition of the Churches of Palestine had been the state of the land and people generally, or if a hope only had existed that such sentiments would spread more and more widely throughout the whole people, the further course of the development and diffusion of the faith in Jesus would necessarily have been this, that the heathens, upon laying aside their national peculiarities, pervaded as they were more or less by idolatry, would be adopted into the organisation of the Jewish people, as perfected and completed by the faith in Jesus Christ. But we know by this time that the supreme and authoritative leaders of the people have for the second time decided against the faith in Jesus; and have already drawn over the mass of their countrymen to regard the Gospel with the same hostile sentiments, and that consequently even though Christian communities are scattered all over the land, they nevertheless formed but a small portion of the whole people, and were nothing more than a select few, in contrast with whom the mass of the unbelieving and the unfriendly stands out the more prominently. But since neither the governors nor the people—neither the head nor the members

fulfil, by believing in Jesus, their divinely appointed destination, it becomes self-evident that the Gentiles could not be admitted into the Church by means of any adoption of Jewish nationality. Still the supposition would at all events be allowable that the Churches which had been gathered from amidst the Jews might be regarded as the preliminary accomplishment and realisation of the idea of a Jewish people, and that their destination now was duly to maintain and to render sensible the relation of the Jewish nationality to the faith in Jesus; in order that from henceforth there might subsist even in the Gentile Church an actual and palpable monument which might point not only to the divine past but also to the divine future of Israel. It was not, however, to be so, even because the kingdom of God loves not half and temporising measures, but issues its laws and principles clearly and distinctly stamped. If the Jews refuse to accept the kingdom of God, in that case it is to be transferred to the Gentiles; their consecrated nation will be of no advantage to the former; and the latter will not find their unsanctified nationality any impediment. Already had there been given hints and preparatory indications of this course of things. But in this case what was to become of the Churches of Judea, of the Apostolical Church of Jerusalem, which only just now were brought before us in their incomparable holiness and glory? This election had no part in the guilt of the obduracy and backsliding of Israel; they have exhibited and fulfilled all that from of old the prophets of God have required of the true Israel; and now of all the external majesty and glory which had been promised to this people by the word of God that cannot lie, not only will nothing be realised, but more, these true sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with their fathers must see with their own eyes that kingdom of God, for which the chosen seats of Israel and Jerusalem had for a thousand years been preparing, with signs and wonders from Heaven, assuming a form and shape, which remind them no more of the land or people of Israel! In the exuberance of their present joy are they likely to forget the whole of the past history of their nation? How can they ever do that? The faith which at the present time they hold, points back at every point to that past; their very faith affirms that Jesus is the Messiah, and what else is

that than the sum and fulfilment of the whole past history of the Old Testament? Or are they likely in their present fulness of the Spirit to give up the glory and majesty of the future? As if they were not men, who, as originally they were created with an organic system of body and soul, were in the same way destined to receive, by union with the man Christ Jesus, a new humanity in a spiritual body. And in their present existence is it not assigned to them as a special subject of their hopes for the future, that the Lord, in whose fear they were walking (see ix. 31) had retired into the heavens in order to come again and bring with Him the times of the quickening and the seasons of restoration (see iii. 20—21). How can they therefore give up either the past or the future of Israel without doing violence to their inmost life and being? And yet they are not only doomed to see and experience it, but they must even help and co-operate in bringing it about, that the kingdom of salvation should receive a shape which should renounce all connection with Israel. One means only exists by which this contradiction can be reconciled and its harshness softened, and that is a recognition on the part of the Apostles and the members of this Church of the first fruits, that it was the Lord himself who had resolved upon and chosen this form of the development of His kingdom. As their walk is in the fear of the Lord, so with them their dearest and nearest wishes are all comprised in that which is the will of their Lord. It is to this will and counsel that they owe both their existence and their redemption, and so sacred is it to them that out of it and independently of it they have nothing that they wish to retain. If, then, they feel confident that the future fortunes of the Church are in the hands of the Lord, they fall into no conflict or issue with their own feelings and convictions; for they know that the Lord cannot contradict Himself. Therefore though every trace may disappear that reminds them of Israel, yet has the Lord himself disappeared, and nevertheless the Kingdom of God has even thereby been manifested on earth; and therefore even though the consecrated organism of Israel may no longer exhibit itself on the *face* of the earth, yet the Lord who devised and perfected it is in Heaven, and when He Himself comes again, He will also make manifest the work of His Spirit and His hands.

When, with such ideas as these, we pass to the section indicated above, which narrates to us the conversion of the centurion and his household, we shall find no occasion for surprise either at its contents or its form. There prevails throughout this section a great circumstantiality of detail. The narrative is limited to a small circle ; but the minutest traits and circumstances, both of time and place, are accurately and carefully given ; and although several times reference is made to earlier incidents, that which had once been told is not assumed to be known by a single reference, but it is repeated on each occasion ; so that the vision which appeared to Cornelius is thrice told (see x. 3—6—30—32 ; xi. 13—14) ; as also the vision seen by Peter is likewise recounted three times (see x. 10—16—28 ; xi. 5—10). This striking fulness of detail and circumstance is intended to give us a practical proof of the great importance which the narrator himself ascribed to the subject-matter of this paragraph. For it must be for no other reason that he detains the reader with the minutest particulars of these incidents ; and on that account alone does he more than once bring the leading facts so circumstantially before us. If we were disposed to judge in this case by numbers, we should not arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. Whereas the conversion of thousands in Jerusalem is briefly told in a few words, it is the conversion of a single individual and his friends that alone forms the subject-matter of the whole of this prolix section. But this prolixity and circumstantiality are at once accounted for, as soon as we reflect that the little band, whose conversion the paragraph before us treats of, are the first fruits of the Gentiles who were to be received into the Church, not after the manner of the Samaritans and the Ethiopian chamberlain, by the intervention of Judaism, but in the way that whole nations and tongues were subsequently to be admitted.

Great offence has been taken at the miraculous character of this narrative. It is true that there is scarcely any incident of the sacred history in which miracles are so accumulated, in a comparatively small space, as they are in this. We will take permission to recount "this series of connected miracles" (as Baur terms the incidents before us) in the appropriate words of Zeller : first of all there appears to Cornelius, while in a state of

trance, an angel who commands him to send for Peter from Joppa; on the next day while the centurion's messengers are on their way to Joppa, the equality of the Gentiles with the Jews, in regard to admission to the kingdom of God, is revealed to Peter by means of a symbolical vision; lastly, a third revelation is made likewise to Peter, which, after the arrival of the messengers, announces their coming to the Apostle, and commands the Spirit to go with them nothing doubting. And in perfect correspondence with this miraculous introduction we have, at the close of the interview between Cornelius and Peter, a divine communication vouchsafed by means of a miraculous speaking with tongues, which really brings about the result to which all these marvels have been pointing—the baptism of the Gentiles by the Apostle (see Theol. Jahrb. 1849. 387).

We shall have no disposition to enter upon that slippery road of a natural explanation which Eichhorn and Kühnöl have in this case pursued; but still we shall not allow ourselves to be enticed to follow the course taken by Neander. Neander, it is true, does most decidedly refute all those who call in question the possibility of a miraculous agency in the case of these events, but yet, in order to explain what took place, he has recourse to the hypothesis, that there are many omissions in the narrative, and that much must necessarily be supplied. Now, that which Neander thinks must be supplied, are certain psychological motives, from which, in the case of the individuals here mentioned, those things are to be derived and to proceed, which, according to the narrative before us, we are to look upon as effects of a supernatural influence (see Gesch. der Pflanzung. i. 90—101). Justly has Zeller characterised this interpretation as a tampering with the text. The liberty of explaining recorded facts by the invention of internal motives and combinations, and thereby bringing them nearer to our own comprehensions, is what no interpreter of any author, and still less an exegetical commentator of the Sacred Scriptures could ever allow himself to take; and in such a sense we may well call a narrative defective. However, much naturally depends on that which is supplied, and these supplementary additions can only be of value in proportion as they serve to throw light on the narrated facts, and they are objectionable in the

same measure as they tend to obscure them. The former case must be looked upon as a proof of the agreement of the commentator with his text, but the latter, on the contrary, requires to be regarded as the proof of a want of correspondence between the two. Now, the latter is undeniably the case with Neander's investigations. For the matter stands as follows. The psychological states and emotions on which Neander lays the greatest stress are in an inverse ratio to the supernatural occurrences: in the same proportion as the former exist the latter become superfluous, and in the same measure as the latter prevail we must suppose that the former are not implied. If, therefore, Neander zealously defends the abstract possibility of angelic appearances, he nevertheless in the concrete case before us, trenches with his psychological explanations too closely on the account which St Luke gives us of this manifestation of angels and divine revelations. For if the psychological influences which Neander adduces had the significance which he ascribes to them, then St Luke, who says nothing at all about these matters, but on the other hand, mentions every other particular, and precisely those which lead us to infer the want and total absence of such psychological elements, must have told his story very badly. But on this supposition St Luke has not only essentially misrepresented the facts, but he also has understood and described the personages themselves from an entirely false point of view. If Neander is right with his psychological explanations, then we are compelled to regard the personages here brought before us as being in the very highest state of spontaneity. But Baur is perfectly correct when he describes in the following words the impression which, according to the text, the personages who here appear, make upon our minds. "All those who take a part in this history, always appear more or less to be passive instruments for the manifestation of certain religious ideas; of which the manifestation is part of a plan of a higher order of things. Let any one only observe how far they are from possessing, not to say a clear consciousness, but even a presentiment of the results which they are destined to produce" (see d. Apostel Paulus p. 79).

Accordingly, we shall be quite justified, if we pronounce the method adopted by Neander, in explaining the facts before us, to be a total failure. The supernatural influences on which St Luke, in

the present paragraph lays the chief stress, ought to convince us that so far from our being entitled to assume any thing like a predisposition in the minds that were here called upon to act, there was in fact an essential obstacle to be got rid of. The common way of thinking does, it is true, make short work with the matter, and calls this obstacle, "Jewish narrow-mindedness" (see Winer Biblisch Realwort, i. 233). But surely the respect that is due to the chief of the Apostles, and to his words and works as they have been authentically recorded, and also to the Holy Spirit himself, ought to have kept back such a reproach, and rather to have suggested the question, whether this obstacle was not an objective one, and such, consequently, as could not be removed by merely human ideas and words, but by the operation of God alone. Thus do we see ourselves led on by the previous histories of the book before us, and brought to a point at which we must look out for some act of God for the tranquillising and confirmation of the Apostolical community at Jerusalem. At this critical moment, accordingly, when the peace and strengthening of the Jewish Christians is the great object, the present narrative is peculiarly calculated to push into the back-ground all human thoughts and deeds, and to put prominently forward the immediate superintendence and providence of God. The narrative will, we think, confirm this position of ours, while on the other hand, the latter will enable us to take the narrative itself in the very light in which it immediately presents itself.

Cornelius, whose conversion forms the subject of the present section, is described to us first of all as a Roman centurion. The fact which his very name of itself suggests—viz., his Roman nationality, is made still more certain by the remark that he belonged to the Italian band, or cohort, which was stationed at Caesarea, and which, as designed for the protection of the Procurator residing in that city, consisted of native Italians (see Wolf Curæ ad h. l.). Now, the person and circumstances of this individual peculiarly fitted him to be the representative of the acceptance of the Gentiles. When, in the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel, the Lord experienced the opposition of the people of Israel, he advanced more than once the following law for the development of the kingdom of God: "The first shall be last, and the last first" (see Matt. xix. 30; xx. 16). It is easy to understand who are the first here spoken of. For it is

evidently the Jews, who, by all their peculiar distinctions, had been brought nearest to the kingdom of God. Now, the fact that these first are the last in their acceptance of the Gospel, has already been brought home to our conviction in the course of the Apostolical history (see ix. 15). And in the same sense that the Jews are the first, the citizens of the fourth great empire of the world are the last. For not only is this fourth kingdom of the world the last in number, and is to reach to the end of the periods of the world's power, but also in its internal constitution it is furthest removed from the original institutions of God. As in the kingdom of Israel the essence of human nature attains to perfection, so in the kingdoms of the world generally that of the animal is the fundamental characteristic, and the element which is pre-eminently developed in the fourth and last empire of the world (cf. Daniel vii. 19—23; xiii. 2, 29—45). But that this fourth and last kingdom of the world was no other than the Roman, would never have been called in question, had not a school of science which resists the very spirit of prophecy, usurped for a long time the interpretation of prophecy (see Hofmann Weissag. u. Erfüllg. i. 277—282). But now of this empire, Cornelius is no ordinary member, but in truth such an one as typified its essence with peculiar distinctness. By race he is an Italian, and consequently belonging to the original elements which constituted and composed that empire long before it attained to the dignity of an empire of the world. His profession is that of a soldier. The essential characteristic of this fourth empire of the world is represented by the hard iron (see Dan. ii. 40). For this empire breaks, crushes, and destroys all besides itself, in the kingdoms and nations of the world (see ib. ix. 19, 23). But what in short is this hard, breaking and crushing element in the Roman empire, but its cohorts and legions, before whom nothing in all the nations and kingdoms of the earth can stand? This representative of "the last" empire, God therefore has chosen for himself, to make him the first-fruits of the Gentiles, and to form of him a beginning which should lend its stamp to the whole state of the Church down to the present day. Accordingly, we here actually see the last becoming the first.

The Roman centurion Cornelius comes to Cesarea. From what we are here told of his internal character, we are justified in assuming that he belonged to that numerous class of the heathens

who, dissatisfied with their ancestral and national religious rites, felt a longing for something higher and better (see Tholuck in Neander's Denkwürdigkeiten i. 91—102). For such minds Judaism must have possessed a strong attraction. Even in Rome we meet with a great variety of religious opinions at this time. The aversion to foreign forms of worship had been overcome by a feeling of the uncertainty and meagreness of their own (cf. Dionysius Halic. x. 53. Dio. in excerptis Anecdota. ed. Mai ii. 258. Livius 25. i. Cicero de Legib. ii. 16). Judaism, however, naturally left on susceptible minds an impression of the greatest purity and trustworthiness, and we consequently find that the profound contempt of Judaism which dwelt in so many minds (see Schmidt Geschichte d. Denk-und Glaubens Freiheit S. 162) was nevertheless in very many so entirely overcome that even in Italy and Rome they attached themselves to the vilified sanctuaries of the despised Jews. (see Hug Einleitg. in d. N. T. xi. 352). How much easier then (assuming the existence of a mental predisposition), is it to conceive such an adhesion to the faith of the Jews in the case of a Roman, transplanted as we know Cornelius was, into the very land of Israel? Piety and the fear of God are mentioned as the leading sentiments of his mind; and indeed so powerful were they that he succeeded in bringing his household to the same way of thinking (ver. 2). And this disposition was evinced by unceasing prayer and constant well-doing towards the people of God (ver. 2). These traits involuntarily recall to our minds the centurion at Capernaum, such as he also is described by our present informant, St Luke. The latter personage also, according to the express testimony of the third Gospel, had distinguished himself by his great love and deeds of benevolence towards the people of Israel (see Luke vii. 4). And it is expressly the elders of Capernaum that bear witness in his favour, just as it is similiarly asserted of Cornelius, that he is well reported of among all the nation of the Jews (see ver. 22). This parallel description seems, moreover, to set in a still clearer light the importance of the conversion of Cornelius. For it was the faith of the centurion of Capernaum that for the first time afforded Jesus an occasion to give utterance to that reversal of the natural order of things in the position of nations relatively to the kingdom of God (see Matt. viii. 11, 12). It has been

disputed whether Cornelius was or not a (so-called) proselyte of the gate. But De Wette (in loc) and Winer (see Biblisch Realwörterb. i. 233, ii. 285), referring to Selden (de jure nat. gent. 2, 3), justly remark that the inferior grade of proselytism ceased to possess any significance on the expiration of the independence of the Jewish state. As soon as the citizenship of Israel was no longer of any significance, the only point which could be of any moment in the mind of an Israelite, would be whether he was or not received into communion with the Jewish people—that is: whether he had or not, by means of circumcision, been made a proselyte in the fullest sense of the term. Now that the connection between Cornelius and Judaism was essentially of a spiritual kind, and that it had by no means moved him to enrol himself as a member of the Jewish nation by means of circumcision, becomes evident from the bare inspection of the narrative before us.

When, then, Cornelius, at one of those seasons of fasting which he had enjoined on himself, about the ninth hour (which was one of the Jewish times of prayer see iii. 1), was addressing himself in prayer to God (ver. 30), an angel of the Lord came to him and said "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God, and now send men to Joppa and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter" (vv. 3—6). It is evidently intended that the centurion's prayers and his alms-deeds should be regarded as the cause why the divine instructions were conveyed to him by means of Simon (see ver. 33). Consequently the alms and prayers of Cornelius are here placed in a causal relation to his conversion. Why else in this passage is there made the general mention of his devotion and fear of God? On this subject Neander (ubi supra. S. 99), with much reason, reminds us of John iii. 21, as throwing the necessary light on this relation. Only, one has absolutely no right to ascribe to the natural heathen, that is, to man devoid of all connection with the word and work of divine grace, such a power to prepare himself for salvation. For we must not lose sight of the fact, that it was only by the closest connection with the people of God, that Cornelius became such as he is here described; and further, also, there cannot be a question, that in the assertion of John iii. 21, the basis of revelation is implied as a necessary condition. And with this restriction it is even self-evident that the meritorious efficacy, ascribed to the alms and

prayers of Cornelius, does as little compromise the absolute character of the divine grace, as the morning tints derogate from the meridian splendour of the sun.

As regards the circumstance, that Cornelius is not referred to Philip the Evangelist, who, as Zeller rightly remarks (ubi supra S. 393), was probably near at hand—since in all likelihood he was even at that time residing at Cesarea (see S. 40, 21, 8)—but to Peter; it was doubtless for this simple reason: that the reception of the first fruits of the heathen might be performed with all possible solemnity, and above all, might be brought immediately near to the very centre of the Apostolical community. On this account it could not be that any one of less consequence than St Peter should take upon him to be the human instrument of his conversion. Whether, moreover, the centurion first learned the name and residence of St Peter from the angel, or was already acquainted with both, is perfectly a matter of indifference, since, to our minds, the appearance of the angel is a certain fact. But if it is possible for an angel to appear to any one, he can doubtless impart to that person names otherwise unknown to him. We must not, however, pass over, without consideration, the fact that not only does Cornelius receive an immediate divine communication, but that this very message of the angel to the centurion forms the introduction to the whole event which is here to be narrated. For it was in any case quite possible that Peter alone should have received instructions from on high, as we found to be the case at the conversion of the Ethiopian. Now, that Cornelius himself should receive a divine message, and that too even before Peter, is intended to be a testimony, that although God had left the heathen to walk in their own ways, He nevertheless had not forsaken them entirely—that He is not only the God of the Jews, but also the God of the Gentiles (see Rom. iii. 29). As therefore in the times of the Old Testament, the Almighty had revealed Himself to Abimelech, to Pharaoh, and to Nebuchadnezzar, and in those of the New to the Eastern Magi; so He here sends His Heavenly messenger to the representative of the Gentiles, who were now to be called and invited to enter into the kingdom of God. If, therefore, at this important crisis of history, God himself proclaims in so impressive a manner His immediate relation to the heathen world; so, on the other hand, in this,

as in all previous instances, the relation in which the heathen stood to the history of salvation, or to the people of Israel, is prominently set forth. As in the instances we have adduced, the immediate communication of Jehovah to the Gentiles merely serves to refer them for further knowledge to the historical revelation; so the injunction of the divine messenger has for its object solely to prepare things for the injunction of the human messenger. But since, as we have seen, it was intended that in any case the conversion of the Gentiles should appear to the Jews to be a work of God, Cornelius must himself take the initiative for the reception of the charge about to be laid upon him.

But if the conversion of the first-fruits—the conversion of Cornelius and his household—was to bear the unmistakeable seal of the divine approbation, it is of itself quite obvious that the immediate reference to Peter was what could least of all be wanting. Peter happened to be on the roof of the house (see Meyer on ver. 8) at noon, for the purpose of prayer; and whilst he is occupied with heavenly thoughts, he fell into a trance, during which he saw the heavens open, and a vessel descending unto him, "as it had been a sheet wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, and there came a voice to him: rise Peter; kill and eat" (vv. 10, 13.) It is evidently with a view to explain this vision, that it is previously remarked that Peter was "very hungry," and that "they were making ready for him," as indeed the learned in the law used to take their mid-day meal about the sixth hour (see Schottgen ad h. l.). The command of the heavenly voice to kill and eat is so much the more impressive, as it fell in with what we were previously told was the condition of Peter. Meyer is perfectly correct, when he says that the usual rendering of *πάντα τὰ τετράποδα*, by "all manner of fourfooted beasts," does not fully express its meaning, for it ought to be "all fourfooted beasts," which indeed appears to transcend the limits of physical possibility; but which, however, as we here have to do with a supernatural domain, ought not to surprise us at all. For Calvin justly observes: prospectum hunc humano more non debemus metiri, quia Ecstasis Petro alios oculos dabat. It was not therefore unclean animals alone that were shown to Peter, as is asserted by Duysing (de visione Petri in Syllog. Diss. ed.

Hasæus et Iken, ii. p. 615), but the whole animal world, without any other distinctions than those of their order in creation (see Gen. i. 26).

The singularity in the divine command is, as Meyer has rightly seen, the fact, that in presence of this collection of all living things, Peter is called upon to kill and eat, whereas, with regard to every living thing, the first question is, whether it is clean, and whether also it is allowed to be eaten. And it serves still further to illustrate this point, that the law about clean and unclean beasts is described as a law to make a difference between the unclean and the clean (see Levit. xi. 46, 47). And from this we may explain how it was that Peter, although he was hungry, and though this requisition from Heaven fell in with his natural wants, still refused to take advantage of the permission granted him. And even when the command was repeated, and accompanied by the express declaration, "What God has cleansed, that call not thou common," Peter could not bring himself to eat. Ordinarily, indeed, this distinction between clean and unclean animals, which, notwithstanding the thrice repeated exhortation, Peter cannot get over, is looked upon as a prejudice, which must disappear upon a wider knowledge of mankind and of nature. In opposition to this opinion, Olshausen justly insists on the force of the word ἐκαθάρισε, which, he argues, points to a really existing impurity. The biblical idea, too, is so far from being a merely subjective one, that, on the contrary, the whole of nature is looked upon as impure and unholy, while the purity and cleanness of natural things for man's use, is regarded as brought about only by God's express command (see Theolog. Commentar. zum A. T. i. 2, 155, 160). In the Old Testament economy, this sanctifying word of God had only purified and appointed for the use of man a definite number of living things, and, now, that same word of God removes the universal impurity of living creatures, and restores them to man to use and enjoy (cf. Matt. xv. 17). Of that immediate purity of natural things, which the ordinary opinion of men takes for granted, even Paul knows nothing. That nothing is in itself common, is not to him a result of immediate conviction, but simply of faith in Jesus Christ (see Rom. xiv. 14); and even if he pronounces every creature of God to be good, he does not mean this independently of the sanctifying intervention of the word of God and of

prayer (see 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5). Consequently, even in St Paul's opinion, so far is every thing from being by nature clean, that, on the contrary, he asserts everything to be impure unto the unbelieving (see Tit. i. 15). The surprising circumstance, therefore is, not that Peter should apply the distinction between clean and unclean, even at a time when he is pressed by hunger, but that he should still adhere to it, even after the word of God has repealed it. This is a position, however, which he naturally could not long maintain; and it follows, as a matter of course, that, when he came to reflect on this vision, his refusal must have appeared to him unjustifiable. And this must obviously have suggested to him, that whenever the event, to which the vision pointed, should occur, he would have to regulate his conduct, not in accordance with his own previous modes of thinking, but in compliance with the divine instructions which he had received.

It was naturally to be expected that, as soon as Peter was restored to his ordinary state, he would come to reflect on the meaning of this vision (ver. 27). While, then, Peter was thinking thereon, the three messengers of Cornelius had arrived in the neighbourhood of the house which belonged to Simon the tanner, with whom he lodged; and after they had made inquiry for it they then asked in a loud voice for one Simon surnamed Peter (ver. 18). Scarcely twenty-four hours have elapsed since Cornelius received his Heavenly instructions when his messengers are already arrived at Joppa, a town which is at a distance of about eight miles from Cesarea. This is a proof of the joyful haste of the centurion and his servants, whom he seems to have admitted to his confidence (ver. 8). Now Neander explains the further course of the matter by supposing that Peter, having heard from the top of the house the messengers of Cornelius inquiring for him, and being thereupon immediately conscious of the internal voice bidding him to go with these men, of whom he at once recognizes that they were not Jews, forthwith consented to go with them, for to this course the vision had already prepared him (see ibid. S. 97). But not only does he, by this representation of it, alter the whole state of affairs, but he also loses sight of the principal point in the crisis of the business. For nothing at all is said of Peter having seen or heard these men from Cesarea; on the contrary, from the very fact that the Spirit says

to him "Behold three men seek thee," we must rather conclude what Bengel has previously remarked: "non audierat Petrus tres viros vocantes." As to what we are told of the questions and inquiries of the messengers, it tends to establish the fact that these heathens came from a wholly different quarter, and having had their instructions as to the name and lodging of Peter, were left to inform themselves of the locality by accurate inquiry. It becomes thereby a matter of indubitable certainty that the introductory step of the call and conversion of the Gentiles did not proceed from Peter, and so far confirms the statement of Cornelius that he had received his instructions immediately from God. As, therefore, on the one hand our narrative evinces an anxiety to impress our minds with a conviction of the immediateness of the relation between the Godhead and this heathen—just as the history of the wise men, of express purpose, sets forth the appearance of the star as the divine warning which determined both the commencement and the termination of their travels —so, on the other hand, an interest is evidently felt, to make it appear that it was by the direct injunction of God Himself that Peter was prepared and instructed for the present emergency. It is the evident object of the history to show that the interview of St Peter with the messengers had not been brought about either by the loud questioning and inquiry of the latter, nor yet by the Apostle's own reflections on the inner voice which spake to his conscience. It was the personal Spirit of God that said to him: "Go with them nothing doubting, for I have sent them" (ver. 20). In this way alone do the instructions given to the Gentiles and those given to the community of Israel attain to equal rank and weight. Cornelius, for final information, is referred to the person of Peter who is expressly described and named to him; and Peter, after receiving the general instructions necessary for him as the person called upon to act, is in like manner directed to the messengers of Cornelius, whose arrival is announced to him. The same Spirit which says to Peter "Go with them," declares in the same sentence "I have sent them." It is quite clear, therefore, that all intermediate causes must here be left out of the question, and we must regard this contact of the Gentiles with the community of Israel as the work of the Spirit of God who attaches himself to both of these hitherto

opposite parties in order to make the justification of both to be distinctly manifest.

The following is the further progress of the business. First of all the two parties relate to one another the divine communications which they had severally received, during which we perceive that Peter putting together the two revelations draws from them a conviction that the vision had a reference to the Gentiles (vv. 28, 29). Accordingly the guidance of the Holy Ghost had thus far influenced him that he entered the house and company of the Roman centurion, and here it is that he learns from the mouth of the latter, that, impelled by a divine communication, he with his friends was waiting to hear from St Peter what commands the Almighty had laid on the Apostle with reference to those who were there assembled. And thus Peter is furnished with a sufficient introduction for his preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, for he had long known and had made up his mind as to what he should say to the Gentiles. It is only natural that this occasion of the Apostle's first preaching to the Gentiles should be regarded by our historian, as an eminently solemn moment (ver. 34), and accordingly the description serves to remind us of the first commencement of Apostolical preaching (see ii. 14). And it is also a thing perfectly conceivable if Peter before he entered upon the subject matter of the Gospel, should have felt himself constrained to declare in this place his opinion on the position of the Gentiles relatively to the Gospel. If then, with reference to this subject he thus begins: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respector of persons; but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him;" he seems in the former part of this sentence to assert too little, and in the latter too much. For while the thought was already familiar even to the heathen mind that the Deity was exalted far above all partiality, the fact that the Apostle should speak of this truth as a revelation and enlightenment imparted to himself immediately by these special intimations, seems only the more remarkable as the same truth was to be found already declared in the Old Testament (see Deut. x. 17). But in fact it is not St Peter's intention to express the general idea so much as its peculiar application to the instance before him. For the knowledge which, in St Peter's case has become a certainty, is that with regard to the

whole mass of men, God is no respector of persons, and that He also no longer regards the very distinction which he had Himself made between His own people and the Gentiles. Now, He expresses the latter truth quite generally and unconditionally, even because the new light causes the general and previously admitted truth to dawn upon him as it were anew. It may be asked how the application alluded to can be contained in the perfectly general expression προσωπολήπτης. It is well known that the Hebrew phrase נָשָׂא פָּנִים is the origin of the peculiar combination of λαμβάνειν and πρόσωπον, while the signification of partiality which it undeniably conveys, is usually deduced from the opposition between persons and things (see Harless zum Briefe an die Epheser 531). But in this explanation it is evident that our contrast between persons and things was before the eye rather than any thing that is involved in the Hebrew word פָּנִים and much less in the Greek πρόσωπον. When we look closer at the principal passage of the Old Testament in which the phraseology occurs (Levit. xix. 15) we discover a very different antithesis from that above given. For here every kind of consideration respecting the פָּנִים that might lead to the perversion of justice is forbidden in the case of the poor man no less than in that of the rich; the judge is on the contrary to judge his neighbour in righteousness. The antithesis to which our attention is here called is riches and poverty on the one hand, and community of country on the other. Riches and poverty are the outward and variable accidents, the feeling of a common country the permanent substance. Accordingly, the sense is: The judge is not to have any respect to the presence of these external and accidental distinctions, but he must regard all who stand before his tribunal according to their essential qualities, and allow justice to be passed upon them in accordance with these their real merits. Accordingly פָּנִים denotes a man's external circumstances as perceptibly expressed by his aspect and appearance. And this explains how it is that it is possible to predicate of God both that he does respect the פָּנִים and that he does not. Wherever, that is to say, the outward aspect is in perfect harmony with the real character, and forms as it were the mirror of it, there the having respect to the person contradicts not the inward being. In such

cases it is said of the Almighty, that He exalts the person and accepts the face of man (cf. Gen. xix. 21; Job xlii. 8). This explanation of the antithesis receives also a further confirmation from the circumstance, that the Hebrew phrase was adopted with an especial liking, both in the Alexandrian dialect and in that also of the New Testament. For it is admitted that the Greek term *πρόσωπον* expresses in a very striking manner, the contrast we have alluded to, between the outward appearance and the inward reality, since by an use of language very widely prevalent, it is used of the theatrical mask, and of the player's part. It is quite plain that the Alexandrian interpretation of the Hebrew נָשָׂא פָּנִים even in 2 Chron. xix. 7 by *θαύμασαι πρόσωπον* (cf. Jude v. 16) can have been based on no other view of the antithesis than the one which we have advanced. And now if we apply this interpretation of *προσωπολήπτης* to the passage before us, we get the following meaning of it: The national distinctions between Israel and the Gentiles belongs not to any essential principle in the relations of nations, but only to the external and accidental appearance; since, therefore, it is certain that God does not judge and decide according to the external phenomena, it is no less undeniable that he regards not the distinction itself. If, consequently, circumcision or uncircumcision is not essential, what then is the real essence to which the Deity has respect? To the *πρόσωπον* St Peter at once opposes the fear of God and the doing righteousness. Now, the negative side of this position had been already established under the Old Testament. The Jew, devoid of the fear of God and of righteousness, was, notwithstanding his circumcision, placed on a par with the uncircumcised Gentile (see Jer. ix. 25; Ezek. xxviii. 10). But now in the presence of righteousness and the fear of God, circumcision ceases to be necessary for acceptance on God's part. This is the new doctrine which St Peter here advances.

Having now convinced ourselves that St Peter does not assert too little in the first member of his proposition, we can the more readily feel assured that his assertion in the last is not too large. A disposition has frequently been shown with some plausibility to interpret the latter as implying that quite irrespectively of the grace of Christ, and merely on the standing of human nature

it is possible to gain the divine favour and approbation. This conclusion has been arrived at by referring the proposition directly to the case before us of Cornelius, and then understanding it generally of all cases where as yet there has not been any contact with the Gospel. But in and by itself the proposition says nothing as to the manner and method by which the individual has attained to this fear of God and righteousness; it leaves therefore perfectly free and open the way, that it is through Jesus Christ that every man arrives at righteousness and the fear of God; only it is taken for granted that a man may be in communion with Christ without abandoning communion with his own people and nation. Now, we must not, it is true, call into question the fact that St Peter, in advancing this position, was really thinking of the case of Cornelius, for to this conclusion we are led especially by the words φοβούμενος αὐτόν (cf. v. 35; and v. 2), but on the one hand we know that it was not without the means of the sacred history of redemption that Cornelius attained to his righteousness and fear of God; and on the other, we know that, so long as no relation subsisted as yet between him and the Gospel, the favour of God revealed itself simply in the circumstance, that he was counted worthy of being referred to the Apostolical preacher of the Gospel. We must therefore abide by what Bengel has advanced with reference to the declaration we are now considering: non indifferentismus religionum, sed indifferentia nationum hic asseritur.

If St Peter did not immediately see what he was to understand by the purification of the unclean animals, now, however, that the interpretation of his vision had dawned upon him, he could not be any longer in doubt as to what he was to think of the purification of the unclean Gentiles. This vision is so far from leading him to the conclusion, that the distinction of clean and unclean animals is purely subjective, that on the contrary it presupposes its objective reality. And just as little does he feel himself constrained to give up that original distinction between the people of God and the nations of the world which God himself had established; but he understands what was spoken to him on the occasion of the vision as intimating that an actual change had taken place in the relations subsisting between

the Jews and the Gentiles, and between both and the Almighty. The truth must have opened upon his mind that the all-sufficiency of the atonement and redemption by Jesus had also this aspect, that the previous prerogative of Israel was just of as little avail as the former depreciation of the Gentiles was a hindrance or obstacle. And we shall be the less disposed to ascribe to St Peter any other view of this matter, when we see that St Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, regards the equal justification of the heathen as by no means a self-evident thing, but calls it a mystery which can only be understood through the redemption accomplished by Christ (see Ephes. iii. 3—6; ii. 14, 16).

We should with good reason expect that, whenever St Peter proceeded to the preaching of the Gospel, the peculiarity of the existing emergency would exercise an influence on that preaching. And we find this expectation in so far confirmed, as we are obliged to view the commencement of this preaching as depending, even grammatically, on the general introductory sentence in which St Peter explains his own position relatively to the case then before him. I agree, that is to say with Olshausen and Neander, in thinking that the accusative λόγον is dependent on the καταλαμβάνομαι which immediately precedes it. If, in the foregoing remarks, we have been prepared for so close a connection between the explanatory clause and the actual preaching, so in what follows it will be our duty to shew that this connection is maintained to the very end of the discourse. Peter does not for one moment attempt to disguise the fact that the message of the Gospel was first of all and originally addressed to the children of Israel (ver. 36), but no less distinctly and clearly does he bring forward such moments as indicate the universal tendency of the Gospel spirit to such a transference of it from the Jews to the Gentiles. It must, however, have appeared as something strange in an Apostolical discourse that the first proposition advanced concerning Jesus Christ should assert his universal dominion (ver. 37). We cannot see therein anything more than the design forthwith to advance an universal principle in opposition to any exclusive reference of the message to the children of Israel; for if the Jesus Christ, the preacher of peace, is the universal Lord,

then his message of peace cannot be confined to any single people. And when, further, the Apostle enters upon the history of Jesus, he so describes His ministry that it is evident he had in view the while the case of the Gentiles, and he so represents His death as to make it appear that whatever advantages the Jews undeniably enjoyed during the life of Jesus were withdrawn again upon His death. That is to say, the characteristic feature which is here given us by St Peter of the labours and ministry of Jesus, consists in this, that he magnifies above all else, and insists solely and alone on His redemption of all who were oppressed of the devil. If, therefore, this is the most eminent of all the labours of Jesus, then has he proved Himself the conqueror over the devil. But now this is precisely the great misery of the Gentiles, that, being left by God to go their own ways, they have fallen without resistance into the power of Satan (see xxvi. 18; Col. i. 13; Rev. xii. 9). Inasmuch then as among the children of Israel, Jesus had made those his especial care and object who, under the oppression of Satan, were undergoing great and manifest sufferings, and thereby were set forth as the representatives of mankind in general as held in bondage by the powers of darkness—that is—pre-eminently of the nations of the world, He had manifested himself as the redeemer of the heathen from their direst necessity. The advantage which Israel had enjoyed from the personal labours of Jesus was, however,—a circumstance to which our attention is here expressly awakened by the discourse entering upon the actual history—again annulled by the fact that the Jews made no other return for all the love and goodness of their anointed king but the basest ingratitude. For that, in truth, this ingratitude of the people had for its immediate consequence the withdrawal of Jesus from His chosen people, Peter as distinctly remarks. He pointedly observes that whereas, hitherto, all the revelation and work of redemption had been manifestly set forth in the life of Jesus, and had been published in all parts of the land (vv. 37—39); the supreme glory which He had after His Resurrection was not now made known to all the people but only to a small company of His chosen friends who had eaten and drunk with him (vv. 40—41), and that thereby was accomplished that with which Jesus had during His life-time beforehand threatened the obstinate and hardened Jews (see John vii.

33—34; viii. 21; Matt. xxiii. 39; John xii. 36). Peter does, it is true, go on to say that notwithstanding all the previous iniquity of the Jews, the Apostles had received the command to address themselves throughout their preaching first of all to the people of Israel (ver. 42), but in accordance with the experience they had subsequently had, he allows the menacing and threatening elements of this preaching to come forward into the foreground; inasmuch as he designates Jesus pre-eminently as the judge (ver. 42, cf. ii. 19—21). For while Jesus is announced as the judge of the quick and the dead, condemnation is implicitly pronounced on the continued unbelief of the Jews. For the message that Jesus is the judge of the quick and the dead, contains no comfort but rather terror for all who as yet have and feel no communion with Him. And on this account Peter forthwith brings forward another thought in which the comfort of the Gospel is set forth as accessible to all. And even now, he does not, it is true, omit to make a reference to the Jews; for he appeals to the witness which all the prophets gave to Jesus. However, he so conveys the spirit of this testimony as to indicate the possibility of every Gentile also appropriating to himself all the consolations which it offers (ver. 43). If, that is, the forgiveness of sins depends objectively on the name of Jesus (cf. ii. 21), and subjectively on faith, then, in this state of things, every one, without exception, has free admission unto the hope of salvation. This, then, precisely is the probe by means of which the preaching of the Gospel tests the profoundest need of the heathen world.

We see, therefore how, in his discourse St Peter pays due regard to existing circumstances. Now, as concerns the Gentiles who were listening to him, we must bear in mind, that they were such as had been prepared for the acceptance of the Gospel, first of all by the secret providence of God which had transplanted them into the land of Israel, and afterwards by His open direction and immediate instruction. Remembering this fact, then, we shall feel that it is quite consistent with the natural order of things if the preaching of Peter, after setting forth the means by which the profound wants of the Gentiles might be satisfied, was attended by an immediate and instantaneous effect. While Peter was yet speaking the Holy Ghost fell upon all who heard the

word, and that too in a manner distinctly perceptible to the senses (ver. 44). On this occasion it is expressly stated that the gift of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit manifested itself in the speaking with the tongues and the magnifying God (ver. 45). And here we cannot avoid recalling to mind the miracles of Pentecost (ver. 47, xi. 15, 17, cf. xv. 8, 9), and thereby we arrive at the supposition that the Gentiles, whose first fruits we are here made acquainted with, are intended to be distinguished in the same way as the firstlings of Israel, as indeed we have already learned to discern in the speaking with tongues which marked the day of Pentecost, a token of the spiritual enlightenment, one day, of all nations under heaven. But without doubt we here have already a transition from that speaking with tongues which, as we have seen, marked the feast of Pentecost to that form of the miraculous sign which we subsequently meet with in Apostolical communities. The essence of the matter is, that is to say, such a giving of praise to God as evinces itself to be the immediate consequence of the fulness of the spirit. And in the same measure as this communication of the Holy Spirit is itself of an extraordinary nature, and is opposed to all previous states of humanity, both individually and generally, and as, accordingly a new power enters into the world, so precisely does the immediate result of this spiritual fulness reveal itself in an extraordinary manner. Its extraordinary feature consists in this, that from the spirit, a peculiar effect is operated on the tongue; in consequence of which this organ, which hitherto had only served to utter words which, as they came from, returned to the earth, became the medium of words which preceded from, and penetrated to, Heaven. This supernatural gift reached its highest point at Pentecost. Now, for this fact two reasons exist. In the first place the miracle of Pentecost was the absolute commencement of this outpouring of the Spirit on the human descendants of Adam; and secondly the Pentecostal community was intended to be set forth as the representative of the universal Church which was to comprise all nations. Accordingly the immediate utterance of the spiritual fulness on this occasion was a wonderful giving of praise to God in the tongues of every nation under heaven. Naturally such an event does not admit of being ever repeated, because such a particular crisis and such an assembly could not possibly again

recur. We can, indeed, very well understand how it was that the expression (γλώσσαις λαλεῖν) which properly applied only to the Pentecostal event where the gift of tongues manifested itself in a variety of different languages, was nevertheless still retained even for the later times (see 1 Cor. xii. 30; xiv. 5—39). It was because the essence of the matter still remained the same and also manifested itself, from time to time, in similar phenomena. The change, which in this respect, necessarily took place, consisted simply in the fact that the extraordinary operation of the Spirit or the tongue was moderated, and the representative character of the speaking with tongues passed more and more into a mere personal relation. If a member of the Apostolical community speaks with tongues, this, viewed relatively to what happened on the day of Pentecost, is a derivative event, and, moreover, such a person has no calling to represent anything beyond himself. Such a speaking with tongues therefore would consequently be nothing more than an individual expression of the effect of the gift of the Spirit in which, however, we should still have to recognize an extraordinary operation of the Spirit on the organ of speech. It is at this stage that this speaking with tongues appears to stand which forms the subject of the explanations of St Paul in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where we perceive that a change in the form of expression from γλώσσαις λαλεῖν to γλώσσῃ λαλεῖν has become necessary (see 1 Cor. xiv. 2, 4, 9, 13, 14, 19, 26, 27). Now in the passage before us we have the intermediate step between the miracle of Pentecost and the Corinthian speaking with tongues. In the case of these firstlings of the Gentiles we are doubtless to understand the talking with tongues as a certain something, both original and unusual for the later Apostolical times, and undoubtedly also, inasmuch as in a derivatory sense, they represent the Gentiles who afterwards were to form the Church, we must suppose that they spoke also with several tongues. The justification of this view is afforded by the fact that the form of expression here made use of (ver. 46) evidently carries us back to the events of Pentecost.

This indisputable sign of the gift of the Spirit to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius occasions great surprise to those of the circumcision who had come with Peter (vv. 45, 23). They justly recognize in this fact a principle: these few are at once looked

upon as "the Gentiles" (τὰ ἔθνη), as in short, the entire current of events compels us to regard those assembled in the house of Cornelius as the representatives of the whole Gentile world invited to join themselves to the kingdom of God. In the whole of the previous course of this history, the gradual turning of God to the Gentiles might be distinctly traced, as indeed Peter had expressly declared it; but the final seal, however, of this favourable disposition was not however to be affixed, except by this communication to them of the gift of the Holy Spirit. For not only was the outpouring of the Holy Ghost the highest gift and grace which had been imparted to the community of Christ in Israel, but fundamentally it was the only one; for all the other privileges of Israel were enjoyed by the Jews who did not believe in Him, in an equal degree with those who did. The communication, therefore, of the Spirit to the Gentiles was the practical equalization of Jews and Gentiles on the part of God. It is on this account that amazement seizes "them of the circumcision," as the Jews are here designedly called; for they at once see that by this act of God, circumcision also—that divine purification, which was the condition of all other saving blessings for Israel—was stamped as belonging to the mere πρόσωπον (see ver. 34). They evidently had not as yet conceived the all-sufficiency of the redemption of Christ, and of the operation of the Holy Ghost as extending to this point, and as all-pervading. And consequently their perplexity at the annihilation of their highest privileges secured to them by a divine sign and token, is far greater than their joy at the abundant riches of the grace of Jesus Christ.

With the Apostle the case is, as we might well expect, quite different. As soon as he reads the clear intimation of the Divine will, to introduce a new step in the revelation of His grace, he willingly and joyfully obeys it; and, therefore, now that the will of God to receive the Gentiles into His kingdom has been set before his eyes by an unmistakeable fact, he is in a position to do something nobler and better than to give way to astonishment. Accordingly, he orders all those who had received the Holy Spirit to be baptized with water in the name of the Lord (ver. 47). At a subsequent period, Peter told his brethren at Jerusalem, that upon the Spirit being given to the Gentiles in the house of the

centurion, the words of Jesus had recurred to his mind how that He had said, "John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (xi. 16, cf. i. 5). It was the immediate baptism by the Holy Ghost, independently of all water baptism, that marked the Pentecostal community as the original body of the Lord. To the mind of the Apostle, therefore, the gift of the Spirit to the Gentiles, which had likewise been effected without the intervention of the baptism of water, is a sign of the same immediate relation between the Lord and the Gentiles. The question may well be asked, why then must baptism follow after all, and not, as in the case of the first society at the day of Pentecost, be altogether dispensed with? Even though we should grant that the immediate gift of the Spirit to the Pentecostal community, and that to the first-fruits of the Gentiles, was equal, still there is a difference in other respects between these two societies which ought not to be overlooked. The former enjoyed an immediate personal communion with the Lord during His sojourn on earth, while the latter had had no personal intercourse with Him; but merely through the word preached, had heard the history of His abode upon earth. Consequently, while in the case of the Pentecostal Assembly the gift of the Holy Spirit is the completion of the personal intercourse, and therefore the baptism by water finds no place among them; on the contrary, to the community of the first-fruits of the Gentiles, that gift is but the immediate beginning of personal communion with Him, which, considering the peculiarity of human nature, required a bodily organ, in order to its perfect completion and full operation. Baptism, therefore, in this case is regarded by St Peter as the continuation of the divine work (see x. 47, xi. 17.) By the gift of the Spirit, God has placed the Gentiles on an equality with the believing Jews. In this there was involved the necessity for Peter also to esteem them and to make them equal; for otherwise he would but set himself to oppose the divine doings and operations. Now that which would place the Gentile on the same level with the Jew, so far as it depended on Peter, was simply baptism; for thereby communion with Christ was perfected, and all individual members were incorporated into the body of Jesus Christ, and were inaugurated into a substantial organic fellowship one with another.

Naturally enough all those go wrong who are disposed to see

a rule in the order which here occurs in the communication of the Spirit and the ministration of baptism. Such a disposition will exist of course in all those who in baptism look pre-eminently to the external and human element, and despise what is sacramental in it. It is therefore in no wise surprising, if Calvin fancies that this passage furnishes an ample support for his own view of baptism, while the Anabaptists also are proud of adducing it above all others. We must oppose such an abuse of this passage, by appealing to that other passage which represents the baptism of the Samaritans as first becoming effectual by the imposition of the Apostle's hands (see viii. 17); and so the misuse of the latter, in which the Romanists, ever since Baronius' time, have imagined they had the consecrated beginning of their hierarchical system, will be met in the best and shortest manner possible, by contrasting it with the text which we are now considering. The comparison of those two passages leads us to the right conclusion, that neither the one nor the other ought to be applied for the establishment of a rule, or for a standard of authority. In both cases the characteristic feature is the extraordinary. And this character is so strongly stamped upon both narratives that it is only by a total disregard of the entire context, that any one could venture upon the bold step of pretending to find in the one a support for a hierarchy, or authority for a pure spiritualism in the other.

How highly necessary was the supernatural and immediate operation of the Almighty himself in the admission of the first-fruits of the Gentiles, again becomes apparent, when we come to reflect upon the impression which the whole transaction made upon the Church at Jerusalem. And if at the close of this section we have so circumstantial an account of this impression (xi. 1—18), it is evidently because our historian felt it to be primarily incumbent on him to point out the connection of the later development of the Church with its first origins and beginnings, and especially that intrinsic oneness which, pervading the whole of the first period of the Church, had been impressed on it by the hand of the Lord himself. The tidings that the Gentiles also had received the word of the Lord have reached Jerusalem (ver. 1); of the impression which the news made, we can hardly expect to hear anything until the fact, in itself so new and so surprising,

has in its actual course displayed its true nature. In the meanwhile, Peter comes to Jerusalem, and they of the circumcision call upon him to explain how it was that he had gone unto men that were uncircumcised and did eat with them. The designation of the accusers of St Peter is οἱ ἐκ τῆς περιτομῆς; the expression in the present passage is remarkable, since in Jerusalem there were no members of the society who were not Jews. We must therefore gather this much from it, that they were even such as laid great stress on their circumcision, and on that account were disposed to despise the Gentiles. It is, moreover, difficult to suppose that in spite of the fact of the reception of the Gospel by the heathen, and of the proceedings of the Apostle Peter, all the Christians in Jerusalem (not excepting the Apostles themselves), should have calmly adhered to their traditional judgment of the relation subsisting between the Jews and the Gentiles, and from this position have called Peter to account. Moreover, it must strike us as a noticeable sign of the brotherly feeling and equality subsisting among the Christians, that these Christians, so proud of their circumcision, should have presumed to force Peter, the first among the Apostles, to give an account of his proceedings. That such freedom had its source pre-eminently in the whole bearing of the Apostles, is proved by the fact, that Peter did not at all assume the appearance of complaining of any disrespect or overstepping the limits which separate the common Christian from an Apostle; on the contrary, he made use of the occasion for stating what he thought both of the whole event itself, and also of his own proceedings in it.

A disposition, however, has been evinced to establish the opinion, that the complaint of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem does not harmonize with the proceedings of Peter, on the occasion of the reception of the Gentiles. For the objection is advanced, that the accusers of the Apostle could not take offence with him, for having gone in among and eaten with the Gentiles, so much as for administering baptism to them (see Zeller in the Theolog. Jährb. 1849, 389). This objection evidently implies a predominant disposition to throw a doubt upon the whole of the present narrative, else it is obvious enough why the charge against St Peter took this shape in particular. For, on the one hand, it must be borne in mind that his familiar intercourse with the

Gentiles was the first occasion and source of what had taken place in Cesarea. It is true that even De Wette pronounces it as suspicious in this regard, that Peter should have spoken of his first coming into the centurion's house as contrary to law (x. 28); but he does not reflect that from all the intimations that had gone before, St Peter must have easily inferred that his coming to the house of Cornelius was to be something more than a mere passing intercourse, and that, as he had previously entertained his messengers, he could not well refuse to become a guest at his table (see x. 23). Besides, no heed has been paid to the fact, that from the position of Judaism there could not be any ground for making the baptism of the Gentiles a special reproach, inasmuch as baptism was not capable of conferring a participation in any specially Jewish privileges. No doubt in his reply, Peter does not enter specially on the objection brought against him; but inasmuch as he brings forward the main point, and shews how God had placed the Gentiles on an equality with the Jews, both by the visions and by the gift of the Holy Ghost, the whole of his conduct, which had been called into question, is represented as nothing more than the simple obedient submission to God's will and work.

As regards, however, the result of this reply of St Peter, it is ultimately followed by an unequivocal and perfect satisfaction, and by an effect in the Church at Jerusalem which vents itself in thanksgiving to God for the conversion which he had wrought among the Gentiles. If the vehement complaints which proceeded from the society at Jerusalem against St Peter testify to the fact that the immediate intervention of the Almighty in the conversion of the Gentiles was indispensably necessary for the maintenance of unity between the Gentile and the Jewish Churches, so on the other hand this issue must convince us that the Jewish antagonism had not as yet become too strong to bow before the immediate conversion of the Gentiles so recently brought about by means of signs and wonders.

§ XIX. RISE OF THE FIRST GENTILE CHURCHES.

(Acts xi. 19—30).

With regard to the connection between the previous section and that which we are now entering upon, Olshausen is of opinion that it is somewhat of this kind: "The first attempt to preach to the Gentiles was soon associated with others." He does not, it is true, go so far as Kühnöl, who is disposed to regard the preaching to the Gentiles at Antioch as a consequence of a report reaching there of the conversion of Cornelius. It is singular, that while in other respects our book has had to suffer so much and so seriously from a neglect of the connection which absolutely exists in it, in the present case a much closer one should be maintained than is consistent with what is the evident purpose of the writer himself. That we are to assume a connection between the following and the preceding narrative is, we must confess, intimated by the mere particle *οὖν* (ver. 19 ;) and, moreover, even on the most superficial perusal, the similarity of the matter contained in both, at once strikes the reader. But besides pointing out the due element of mutual dependence, it was evidently, at the same time, the author's object to allow the difference and the contrast to stand out distinctly alongside of the similarity and correspondence of the two paragraphs.

It is certainly the most obvious method to think of the course of the further development of Christianity as beginning with the conversion of Cornelius and from thence gradually advancing. For to encourage the whole subsequent series a beginning had been made and set up before the eyes of men, which by signs and wonders had been shewn to possess divine authority, while the word and work of Peter stamped it as Apostolical, and this must, it would so seem, furnish a necessary stay and sufficient warrant in all subsequent times. But the section before us exhibits an entirely different course. Of the conversion of Cornelius and all his house, in the town which was the seat of the Roman Procurator having had any further influence upon the Gentiles, there is not a word ; on the contrary, the history of the Acts of the Apostles

points out to another locality where it is not merely a single household from among the Gentiles that is converted to the faith in Jesus; but a great multitude who at once form a community which becomes the beginning and origin of the many communities of the heathens in the whole Church of the Gentiles. And it is the object of the paragraph now before us to make us acquainted with the rise of these important bodies—of this new historical addition to the development of the Church. But there is not even a remote allusion to any historical connecting link between this commencement and the conversion in Cesarea or between it and the Apostle Peter; on the contrary, in order to put aside any idea of the kind, we are at once referred to quite a different quarter. For the narrative goes back to the persecution which had been occasioned by the martyrdom of Stephen, and which fell upon the whole Christian community at Jerusalem. We here learn that those who at this time were scattered abroad were not dispersed through the provinces merely of Judea (see viii. 1), but that they spread beyond the limits of Palestine into Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. Moreover, a remark which we previously made, receives here a farther confirmation: that they who were thus dispersed abroad, although for the most part but simple members of the community, preached the word of the Gospel wherever they came (v. 19. cf. viii. 4). On this occasion, however, an important circumstance in the diffusion of the Gospel at this time, again recurs: these preachers of the word addressed themselves first of all at any rate, and usually only to the Jews. Some of them, however, upon their arrival at Antioch directed their preaching to the Gentiles also—especially to the Grecians (see v. 20) of the success which attended the former not a word is said; while, however, the narrative dwells upon what was accomplished by the latter. It is evidently intended thereby to call our attention from the outset to the fact, that the preaching to the Jews beyond the limits of Judea had been as little productive of any future consequences as it had been within their own land. On this account our narrative tells us absolutely nothing of the results attained by those who went up and down preaching the Gospel to the Jews of Palestine, whereas it is clearly not without an object that it dwells with such minuteness of detail on the labours of Philip among the heathen

Samaritans, and in his mission to the Queen of Ethiopia's chamberlain.

It is distinctly stated that it was men of Cyprus and Cyrene who first ventured to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles (v. 20). They belonged consequently to the class of the Grecians (see vi. 1) who had originally settled in Jerusalem from religious motives. It was Hellenistic Jews who, having their minds aroused by the wonders of the day of Pentecost were first gained over to the Church (see ii. 5). It was to this stock probably (which, on the day of Pentecost, had been grafted on to the Church), that the first converters of the Gentiles in Antioch belonged. That Cyrenians were among the first observers of and wonderers at the descent of the Holy Ghost is expressly stated (see ii. 10), and that natives of Cyprus were to be found amongst the first Christians in Jerusalem we see from the striking instance of Barnabas (see iv. 36). Now that such Hellenists, who, from a pious zeal, had chosen Jerusalem for their residence, and consequently had been attracted by the true Israelitish character of the community at Jerusalem, and had come to the faith in Jesus, were capable of attaining to that freedom, which was necessary for the first preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, is from several reasons easily conceivable. Out of a pure zeal they had sought Jerusalem as the city of the sanctuary, and the seat of supreme authority in Israel; now, however, it had become clear to them that this city, with its rulers at its head, was seeking to destroy and to crush the true sanctuary which was set up within the Church of Christ; consequently, they must have felt convinced that Israel had completely and utterly perverted its proper character, and if, therefore, it still retained the original one in appearance, this contrast between the reality and the appearance could only have been a motive for the God of holiness to cast off the Jewish people altogether. And such an impression would only be the more strengthened by the fact that the persecution of Stephen had originated mainly with the Hellenists (see vi. 9). For the wild fanaticism of the Jews against this the first martyr must have appeared to them the more culpable the more nearly related to them were those to whom Stephen had himself belonged, and to whom he had been attached. On the other hand the death of Stephen, to all appearance belonging himself to

the Hellenists (see vi. 9), whereby he had set the most certain seal possible to his powerful testimony to the unsubdued nature of Israel, must have especially contributed to render this kindred body sensible of the removal, which facts were making day by day more plain, of the divinely appointed distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles. But just as the obduracy of Israel must have grown more and more distinctly apparent to the eyes of the spiritually-minded Hellenists, and as with it there must also have sprung up by degrees an estrangement from the Jews, so those elements which from their earliest days had allied them to the heathen, such as language, and education, must have acquired proportionate strength. In this regard the very locality is not without its significance. Antioch, a strong town on the Orontes, according to Josephus, de bello Jud. iii. 2, 4, the third city of the Roman empire, was the extreme outpost of Grecian civilization and language, and on this account it is described by Cicero pro Arch. poet. c. 3 as a locus nobilis, celebris quondum urbs et copiosa, atque eruditissimis hominibus liberalissimisque studiis affluens. But that from the earliest down to the present times, the Jews have ever shown a peculiar facility in adapting themselves to foreign habits and civilization is a well established fact. Moreover, the very name of these Jews, born and living out of Palestine, suggests the same fact; and we have in Philo and Josephus (the two leading representatives of the Judaism of this date), a palpable proof of the readiness with which the Jews adopted the language and civilization of Greece.

In this way, then, it came to pass that the Hellenistic Christians from Jerusalem, influenced by a free inward impulse, betook them with the publication of the Gospel to the Hellenes of the capital of Syria. And this preaching, thus suggested by the free impulse of the Spirit indwelling in every Christian, had far greater and more lasting consequences than that of the Apostle Peter in Cesarea, though introduced by such great signs and wonders. For it is written, "the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord" (ver. 21). As soon as this event is reported at Jerusalem, its importance is immediately recognized there; and Barnabas is forthwith sent to Samaria (see viii. 14). But precisely the comparison, which here so spontaneously presents itself, shows

at the same time the great difference of the case we are now considering. In the former case, it is the twelve Apostles who deliberate upon the labours of Philip in Samaria; and who send the two of their own body to the spot; and it is in further conformity therewith, that it should be the prayer and imposition of hands by these two Apostles that first set the seal to the work of the Deacon. In the present instance, it is not the company of the Apostles who make the conversion in Antioch a matter of special consideration, but the community in Jerusalem; and similarly it is not an Apostolical missionary that is delegated by the Church to the work; but Barnabas the Grecian, a native of Cyprus, even because, in all probability, he appeared to be the most closely connected with those who had effected the conversion of the Gentiles in Antioch. But now as this mission to Antioch from Jerusalem had a wholly different origin, so also the operations of Barnabas are of quite another nature. He finds nothing to complete or to ratify: without his help or accession, all is perfected and sealed by the word of the Lord; on this account it is said that "he came and saw the grace of God;" and nothing else remained for him but to be "glad." And as he felt himself impelled to make known to the Christians of Antioch his own inmost feelings, he had nothing more to say to them than to exhort them, "that, with purpose of heart, they should cleave unto the Lord" (ver. 23). Luke himself is aware that this result of the visit of Barnabas has in it a something very surprising: and he feels himself compelled on that account to subjoin a remark on the character of Barnabas, in order to intimate that this perfect approbation on the part of Barnabas of all that had been attempted and accomplished in Antioch was to be explained by the peculiar fitness which Barnabas possessed for the purpose of this investigation. For, in the first place, "He was a good man" (*ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός*). Now, when Kühnöl and Meyer take the word *ἀγαθὸς* in its widest sense, they close against themselves the only way of explanation; as indeed the former is disposed, in defiance of all coherence, to connect the twenty-second with the twenty-fourth verse, while the latter advances nothing at all to explain what it is that the motives in ver. 24 are intended to account for. The word has evidently in the present passage the sense of benevolence, as Tholuck, on the

Epistle to the Romans (p. 233, 234) has clearly demonstrated. By virtue of this benevolence, Barnabas was able to repress any disposition to censure that might arise from the singularity of the phenomenon, and with liberality and gladness of heart, was ready to discern a good will and spirit even in a form calculated to offend. And this connexion of the thoughts was long ago adopted by Calvin. If now it is added that Barnabas was full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, this is intended to point out another aspect of his character which still further qualified him to form a right judgment of this matter. If Barnabas had been nothing more than good-natured, his judgment might possibly have been biassed; but now that the fulness of the Spirit and of faith dwells at the same time within him, he is not likely to approve of or to permit anything which does not spring out of the same Spirit and faith. Since then the sentence of Barnabas rests on so solid a foundation, it is simply a further confirmation of what had been previously asserted by St Luke in respect to the first converters of the Gentiles in Antioch.

Barnabas then enters fully into the mind and spirit of the new work which the Lord had commenced in Antioch; and, in this spirit, pronounces his free and joyous acknowledgment of it. By this circumstance a new result is attained in this domain, "much people," we are told, "were added to the Lord" (ver. 24). And this spontaneous result raised the hope to a certainty, that the work would attain to a futurity, and that he himself had a call for it. And here the thought of Saul occurs to his mind: he had been acquainted with him at Jerusalem, and is aware of the extraordinary revelation which the Lord had vouchsafed to him (ix. 27), and without doubt, Barnabas had also been informed of the instructions which had been given by the Lord unto Saul during his stay in that city (see xxii. 21). Here, in the great capital of Syria, which in its whole aspect, pointed to the West—here, where for the first time he beheld an immediate operation of the Lord among the Gentiles, a clear idea of the destination of Saul might perhaps have dawned upon his mind. He goes "to Tarsus to seek Saul," and induces him to return with him to Antioch. And in the Church of this place the two laboured together for a whole year, and taught a great number of people. We are to understand this teaching as

having for its object not so much the enlargement of the community, as rather the "grounding and settling" of such Gentiles as were already converted unto the Lord; so that here also in the Gentile Church at Antioch the same labours of Apostolical instruction were added to and followed their conversion, as we have already noticed in the case of the Jewish community at Jerusalem (cf. xii. 42). And when at length, by these Apostolical labours the Church had become more settled and their character had received a purer and more definite shaping, there arose also the new name of Christians, which was given to the disciples first of all in this locality. Now it is evident that this designation did not take its rise within the bosom of the community; for then we should find it more frequently used in the times of the Apostles, whereas in the Apostolical writings the Christians bear no express name at all, but are usually described with reference to the faith, or to their discipleship. But neither did this appellation come from the Jews, for as Kühnöl, with justice observes, such a term would imply a renunciation of the faith in the Messiah which could in no wise be expected of the Jews, especially in opposition to Christians. Accordingly the name must have proceeded from the heathen population of Antioch. Now as Antioch was famous in ancient times for its scoffs and satire, as Wettstein in loc. has shown; and further, as according to Wettstein, the names with the termination *avos* were used to designate political parties, it seems an obvious inference to conclude that by this name the people of Antioch expressed their contempt for the disciples of Jesus, as a party who acknowledged for their leader one that had been crucified. And it is as such a designation, arising purely from an external source, that this name occurs in the two other passages where we meet with it in the New Testament, namely, Acts xxvi. 28, and 1 Pet. iv. 14. Now, the very circumstance that St Luke notices this denomination given to the Christians in Antioch by the Gentiles is to our minds a sign that in this fact an advance in the inner development of the Church is announced. And in truth it is even so: The mere fact that the heathen give it a name, points to a peculiarity of the Christian Church, which at an earlier period had no existence. Naturally, indeed, it was not at Antioch that the heathen for the first time came into contact with Christians, but

inasmuch as externally the appearance of the Christian communities, and also of their individual members, was but as a form of Judaism, no necessity would arise from such intercourse for the heathen to give them a special denomination. But the case became different as soon as a Christian community was formed in Antioch. As there were many Jews dwelling at Antioch (see Josephus de bell. Jud. vii. 3, 3; ii. 18, 5; Antig. xii. 3, 1); the distinguishing features of Judaism were perfectly well known to the heathen there. Accordingly they very soon discovered that the newly formed community, which had now been settled and grounded by Apostolical preaching, had little or nothing at all in common with the essentials of Judaism; but that, on the other hand, it stood in just as sharp and decided an opposition to heathenism; and in this way there would arise the need of a new term by which to designate this entirely new phenomenon.

We are now, then, in a condition to determine accurately the position which our present section assumes in the series of developments—or, in other words, to indicate exactly the difference between the heathen at Antioch and those at Cesarea. The resistance of the Jewish people first of all against the Son of Man, and then against the testimony of the Holy Ghost, had brought it about that the system which God had instituted for the formation and development of His kingdom on earth must be set aside. This result was for the first time practically shewn in the most striking manner at Cesarea by the admission of Gentiles to the kingdom of God without the intervention of Judaism. So long, however, as the case so stands, that the instrument which God had, by His own hand, fashioned and prepared for the salvation of the world is no longer used by Him, simply because it has been spoiled by the hand of man; God and man appear to stand in the presence of each other as beings equally powerful and equally justified. But as it is the object of the work we are examining to exhibit the reign of the ascended Jesus, and therefore to display His irresistible might, and wisdom, and dominion, it must have been within the scope of this object to bring to light a very different relation than that of equality of power and right between the divine and the human aspects of the matter. Now, this other relation, in which the absolute victory of the Lord in Heaven over the opposition of man on earth is set forth, is even that

of the pushing the original Apostolic office into the back-ground. Not only from its characteristic number was this Apostolic office designed for the creation of a new Israel corresponding to the old Israel, but this number is also, to our minds, a proof that there exists an analogy between the preparation and training of the people of Israel, and the founding and establishment of the original Apostolical office. For instance, the fundamental condition of election into the company of the twelve Apostles is intercourse with Jesus during his terrestrial existence (i. 21, 22). The original office, therefore, of the Apostolate rests still on the ground of a purely external qualification, which as yet has not been enlightened and sanctified by the fire of the Spirit and of death. It is certainly quite true that the call to the Apostolate before it could become efficient, had to wait for the filling with the Holy Ghost which descended from Heaven; but still the condition we have just mentioned is the fundamental one, and one of permanent obligation for all eternity. Now the whole of Israel was called under similar conditions and relations of the externality of this earthly life, in order to attain, by means of the fulfilling with the Holy Ghost, to the realisation and completeness of their holy vocation. Just as the Apostles, by receiving the Holy Ghost, arrived at the consummation and effectual operation of that whose first beginnings they had received within the limits of outwardness, so the whole of Israel, by means of the preaching of these its twelve new patriarchs, ought to have gone on to make perfect that holy call, which of old had been made upon it. But as in the treachery of Judas the type had already been set, so came it to pass in the reality, as soon as the people were brought into contact with the preaching of the Apostles. Of the privileges of intercourse and close familiarity which he enjoyed by virtue of his Apostolical function, Judas had availed himself, in order to betray his master; and so the prerogative of being the first to whom the Gospel should be preached, which Israel enjoyed as the elect people of God, was abused for the purpose of indulging its hatred against the disciples of Jesus. Herein did human depravity reveal itself in its profoundest depths. As in the personal sphere it was not possible, so far as the external appearance goes, that a higher degree of sanctity and godliness should exist, than the Apostolical intercourse of

Judas with his Lord, so in the case of nations it is impossible to conceive of a greater amount of sanctification and enlightenment of all their national relations than that which fell to the lot of Israel from its divine election and guidance. In both instances we see how possible it is for man to adopt all the externals of a sanctified nature, and yet to divest himself of true holiness and godliness, in order to make use of the former as a foundation of his resistance to the will of God when He would advance these sacred principles to their fulfilment and perfection. The intercourse with their Lord which the Apostles were permitted to enjoy, was intended to enable them, by word and deed, to appreciate the name of Jesus as the only salvation of the world; but Judas made use of this Apostolical privilege in order, by word and deed, to betray the name and person of Jesus to his deadly enemies. From the letter of their law and by their temple service, Israel should have learned to recognise in Jesus Christ the personal fulfilment of the law and the bodily indwelling of God among them, and, what was thereby accomplished, the reconciliation of the divine and the human will; but it is even to these external things, the law and the temple, that the people of Israel so clung, as with unparalleled zeal, to stand up against Jesus Christ and the testimony to Him (see vi. 11, 14). While, then, in this fact the profoundest human depravity had historically demonstrated that the holiest of external and natural conditions might be perverted into instruments of the flesh when resting on itself it indulges in enmity against God (see Rom. viiii. 7), so also the kingdom of grace, if it is to maintain its power, which abounds much more than sin (see Rom. v. 20), can reveal itself in no other form than as a kingdom of the Spirit, and can allow its operations to proceed by no other law than that of the Spirit. And so we find it confirmed in the sacred history. The unceasing opposition of the ancient Israel had this result that the connection of the history which was continually interrupted, is preserved in no other form than that of writing. The hostility of Israel against the earthly manifestation and corporeal revelation of Jesus Christ, resulted in this, that His earthly and external personality was withdrawn into the inaccessible depths of Heaven. Similarly, then, stands it also with the original Apostolate which arose under conditions of an external nature.

The book before us shews that as soon as Israel manifested its aversion for the testimony of the Spirit, the Apostolical office retired gradually into the obscurity of the first beginnings and "origines" of the early church, in order to leave free space for other powers and gifts which, as fundamentally resting on externals, it did not itself possess.

We would call to mind the fact that, as soon as the supreme authorities of the state in Jerusalem had adopted a decided part against the testimony of the Apostles, there came upon the community such a fulness of the Spirit that even those who were not Apostles began with joy to preach the Word (see iv. 31). Further, we have also observed that the development of the relations between the Church of Christ and the people of Israel was advanced a considerable step by means of Stephen who had himself belonged to and had been promoted by the community. But, in connection with this view of the subject, the fact of the Apostle's continuing to abide in Jerusalem at the very time when the limits within which the Gospel was preached, were extended by their means who had been driven out of Jerusalem, must strike us as especially worthy of remark (see viii. 1, 4). Hereupon the labours of Philip who had been chosen deacon by the community, must, such as they are described, have evidently encroached upon the work and vocation of an Apostle. But still more than all that we have hitherto mentioned, does the call and conversion of Saul of Tarsus throw light on this course of the development. In this fact, for instance, we discern the rise of an Apostolate which was not tied to the previously observed condition of external relations, but which simply had its foundation and origin in the sphere of the Spirit, and which, in consequence of the change which has taken place in the development of the Church, received its mission for the very purpose of undertaking the task of planting and guiding the Gentile Churches which now began to spring up. When we bear in mind all these antecedent facts, which must have been known to the Apostles from more direct experience and information, we can well understand the conduct of the Apostles on the rise of the first Gentile communities at Antioch. It has been already observed that on this occasion nothing is said about the Apostles; a circumstance the more remarkable, as on a perfectly similar occa-

sion the Apostles came so prominently on the foreground (see viii. 14, 17). This admits of no other explanation than the hypothesis that in the meanwhile the change we allude to had established itself more and more clearly as determined by the will and counsel of the Lord. Three circumstances, for instance, had taken place in the interval: By an extraordinary instruction of the Spirit, Philip had been called to baptize the chamberlain from Ethiopia; Saul of Tarsus had received from Heaven his appointment to be the Apostle of the Gentiles; and lastly, upon the preaching of the men of Cyrene and of Cyprus, the Gentiles in Antioch had been converted in great numbers unto the Lord. Now, as regards the last event especially, it must have tended to make it quite clear to the Apostles, that it was decidedly the will of the Lord to allow the outward ordinances to be pushed into the background in the enlargement of the Church; if trespassing on the ground of that Spirit which rules in the Church, He allows these men from the far off islands and shores, without name and without office to step forward in the great imperial city of Antioch with such extraordinary results. That they perfectly understood these hints is clear from the self-restraint with which in this case they so evidently keep themselves in the background. And in the self-command of the Apostles there is exhibited the triumph of the Spirit over the flesh, the victory of grace over sin. For the fulness of the Spirit and of grace is revealed, not merely in the fact that in spite of the resistance of the flesh and of sin, the Church enters upon and maintains a development of such a kind, that in the place of those externals which sin had won over to its service, an illimitable might of the Spirit succeeds—that the void made by the withdrawal of the Apostles is instantly filled by other witnesses called by the Lord and His Spirit, but also in this instance, that the Apostles themselves, by virtue of the same fullness of the Spirit, submit on every occasion, and remit again to the Lord the exercise and authority of their office. Thus it is one and the same Lord and the same Spirit who evokes in Antioch the words and works of the unnamed and uncommissioned converters of the Gentiles, and in Jerusalem the silence and inactivity of the Apostles, however expressly called by name and publicly commissioned.

But precisely at the moment that we have discerned the contrast between the present and the preceding section there arises the question: What then could have been the object of that extraordinary and miraculous call of Peter for the conversion of Cornelius, if the rise of the first community from the Gentiles was so evidently and so intentionally designed to be accomplished without the intervention of the Apostles? As there has been a misapprehension of the past of Israel and of the corporiety of the Lord which claimed to itself the name of spirituality; so also in very recent times a misapprehension of the original Apostolate has likewise come forward under the assumed title of inwardness and spirituality, and has endeavoured to gain currency. It is, however, the more incumbent on us to oppose this false pretext of spiritualism the more we have found ourselves constrained by the work we are examining to enter upon an investigation and defence of the rights of the Spirit. The spirit to which these despisers of the divine corporeity appeal is not the Spirit of God who created the body, and who, if He kills it, does so only in order to quicken it again, and to glorify it; but the spirit of philosophy, of whose hostility to Scripture, Bengel, on 2 Cor. v. 4 makes the very pertinent remark: non agnoscit fides philosophicum corporis a creatore dati fastidium. It is true that the past of Israel, though sanctified of God had not found either place or significance in the series of events which powerfully influenced the world; but so little does it deserve to be considered as a series of fables, that, with all its specialities, it has been preserved in the inviolable mystery of Holy Writ, and from this sanctuary it exercises a silent influence on the present and on the future of the Church. So also, of the corporeal manifestation of Jesus on earth, not the slightest trace is left, but yet no one would venture to look upon it purely as a thing that is past, and consequently to disregard it as wholly without importance for the present; for it exists in heaven, and therefore for faith and for sacramental communion it is an ineffably precious blessing. And similarly is it with the original Apostolate. The modern dream of a Judaising narrowmindedness and of an Ebionitism in the original Apostles, which were only overcome at a later date, has nothing more than the mere appearance, in common with the liberality of Stephen, the spirituality of Saul, and the historical statements of St Luke.

Our book has in every way taken care to impress on our minds the difference between the first and the second Apostolate, but at the same time also it has guarded against our converting this difference into an opposition. Luke has removed this difference entirely out of that sphere of personal and individual considerations, which the critical school is unable to rise above, in that he distinctly enough awakens attention to the fact that the impulse to this transition was presented on the part of the world. But now, that which our present work furnishes for meeting and opposing the world when exhibiting its last powers of resistance, is not human, personages and forces, but the Lord, whom the very opening of our narrative describes as sitting down on the highest throne of Heaven. The same Lord it is who, in presence of the Jews, plunged in the carnal corruption of the flesh, causes his kingdom to be divested of all external forms and to assume the shape of the Spirit. He it is who permits the Apostleship of Peter, whom He had called at the Sea of Gennesareth, to retire into the shade, and advances that of St Paul, in such wise as, while He imposes silence on the former, He bids the latter to speak and to preach. In such a combination of things this silence is so far from being a sign of an inferior and superseded position, that, in order to effect it, no lighter operation of the Holy Ghost is required than was necessary to bring forward the Apostle Paul and to set him to work. But our narrative could not rest satisfied merely therewith ; by many hints not to be mistaken it has evidently sought to rivet our attention on the fact, that the original Apostles and the Apostolical community must be thought of as having been in the fullest and most perfect harmony with the later development of the Church. This is the bearing and significance of the two narratives which describe the labours of Peter and John in Samaria, and also the conversion of the first fruits of the Gentiles by Peter. But just as on the one hand these two narratives run parallel, so on the other the history of the conversion of the Ethiopian chamberlain by Philip has its counterpart in the description of the rise of the Gentile Church in Antioch. The reverse in both cases shows for instance that the preceding connection of the further development with the commencement made by the Apostles is to be regarded only as a sign of an intrinsic unity, and not as a connecting link of a mere ex-

ternal one. By the baptism of the chamberlain of Ethiopia, which was brought about by the manifest operation of the Holy Ghost, the external connection between the laying on of the Apostles' hands and the fullness of the Spirit which was poured out upon the Samaritans is withdrawn and transferred into the domain of the inward Spirit, just as the link between the Apostolical labours of St Peter and the conversion of the Gentile Christians in Cesarea is taken away by the conversion of the heathen in Antioch as effected by the hidden operation of the same Spirit. If therefore we would comprise in general terms the result to which the account of these opposite events conducts us, then we would say that the domain of history on which we are now moving presents itself before us as a kingdom of the Spirit which, so far from being inconsistent with a bodily manifestation, assumes it rather as its necessary condition, and as a kingdom too of such a corporeal manifestation as does not cling jealously to its maintenance, but wherever a higher will than its own requires it, voluntarily and cheerfully resigns and sacrifices itself.

If therefore the paragraph contained in vv. 19—26 holds a a position so clearly defined in the course of our general narrative, it is not easy to conceive (what, nevertheless, is pretty generally assumed) that what is communicated in the following verses (vv. 27—30), stands only in a very loose connection with all that precedes. In fact the subject, with which we are here concerned, is nothing less important than the characteristic traits by which the newly arisen and apostolically confirmed Church, testified its existence in its own peculiar spirit. The first occasion for this was furnished to the community at Antioch by a visit of certain prophets from Jerusalem (ver. 27). The existence of prophets in Jerusalem need not surprise us after we have heard Peter on the day of Pentecost openly declaring that Joel's prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh in Israel had attained to its fulfilment in the Church of Christ (see ii. 15—18). Moreover, the gift of prophecy in the New Testament must be viewed in the same light as it is under the Old; and accordingly we must look upon it as a capacity in the inspired person, as the mouthpiece of God, to declare the divine law to the people (see Exod. vii. 1). Accordingly, under the New as under the Old dispensation, the prophetic function was ordinarily directed to the spiri-

tual awakening and the quickening of the congregation ; where, however, in the discharge of this office, there arose a necessity for a divine revelation of coming events, in such cases the power was vouchsafed to these men of making known God's will with regard to the future. From the arrival of these prophets from Jerusalem we see that the newly formed Church in Antioch was still kept in view in the holy city, although it might seem that, after dispatching Barnabas, its attention and interest had expired. These prophetical personages may have been of opinion that their gifts and labours were likely to prove especially salutary in the Church of Antioch. But as nothing is reported of any such labours, this circumstance seemingly implies that we are not to suppose that this community was destitute even at the very first of spiritual gifts and powers (cf. xiii. 1). Another circumstance, however, and one to which the arrival of these prophets gave the occasion, is prominently mentioned—the prediction of Agabus who was one of their number. It is not enough simply to defend this prophecy, of which it is expressly stated that it was signified "by the Spirit" against the suspicion which even Winer does not hesitate to advance (see Realworterb. i. 36), as if it rested "merely on a combination from circumstances which partly had already began to come into operation;" but the very record of the prophecy, so far from being to be regarded as a passing unconnected notice, must be thought of as occupying an appropriate place in the course of development to which the immediate subject of our narrative belongs. For the Spirit which gives the prophecy is even the same Spirit that founds, maintains, and governs the Church in all places ; its prediction therefore will be in unison with the condition of the Church. And St Luke shows himself to us as one who has been enabled to enter profoundly into the inner course of the development of the first communities, and has evidently a design to make his readers acquainted with that inner course. If, therefore, he reports this prediction to us, we may take it for granted that he has provided the means by which we might inform ourselves as to its connection with the whole of the history. In fact, in the rise and confirmation of the Gentile Church in Antioch we have an important prophetic moment brought before us. The very fact that the Gentiles are converted in large numbers is an infallible sign of the last times ;

for the blessing of the Gentiles was set up from the times of Abraham as the ultimate goal of the whole history of redemption. But that the heathen should turn to the true God without being previously admitted into the people of God prepared for the Priest and Prophet of all nations, is a practical judgment of God on the ineptitude of His people—a sign of the divine rejection of Israel. In Jerusalem the prophets must have had satisfactory proof enough of the obduracy of Israel ; and now they behold in Antioch, the Church of the Gentiles, which serves the God of heaven in all holiness and righteousness without having taken upon them the sign of the Old Covenant. In the midst of such observations it could not well be but that the Spirit should bring to their remembrance the last discourses of Jesus, in which He had announced the judgment of Jerusalem, and that also of the whole world. Here, then, in the general coherence of events lies the connecting link for the prophecy of Agabus. Famine had been expressly mentioned by the Lord among the awful forerunners of the last judgment (see Matth. xxiv. 7 ; Luke xxi. 11). But that Agabus should see the great famine which should be throughout all the world, need not cause us any surprise ; for that which the prophets see in Antioch, is only a further confirmation to them, that Peter had spoken the truth, when on the festival of Pentecost, he had announced the approach of the last days ; indeed, we also know that Jesus himself had described the judgment of Jerusalem not otherwise than as the last judgment on the whole earth. We have therefore to regard this prediction in the light of an announcement of the near approach of one of the awful harbingers of the final judgment which the Spirit had given in Antioch, on the occasion of its being known that the heathen in that city were converted.

Even if this prediction had been considered abstractedly, and weighed in and by itself, we should still without much difficulty have arrived at this view of it in connection with the history of the prophetic word. But in the present, as in so many thousand instances, the over-hasty accomplishment of its fulfilment has exercised a perplexing influence. It is true that in this case the fufilment has been pointed out to us by St Luke himself; and so every one felt that he could in this case apply himself with less of prejudice to a comparative view of the prophecy and its fulfil-

ment. The mistake has consisted in this, that they have gone to work without having previously arrived at a clear insight into the general relation between prophecy and its fulfilment. Now, it is true, that several very notable instances of famine are recorded by historians as having occurred in the reign of Claudius (see Kühnöl in loc.) But it has been forcibly observed, that not one of them extended over the whole empire; two affected only the city of Rome itself, one Judea, and the fourth Greece. Usher, in consequence, adopted the conclusion, that the famine thus predicted by Agabus, and recorded by St Luke, had not been noticed at all by historians—an assumption which, although it gained the adhesion of great names, is however totally untenable, when we consider the rich and copious sources of information which we possess for this period. Equally arbitrary, too, is the position set up by Kühnöl, that *ὅλη ἡ οἰκουμένη* signifies nothing further than Judea. In order to understand the relation between the prophecy and the fulfilment of it asserted by St Luke, we must realise to our minds the fact, that it is not in its lowest degree that what Crusius says of prophecy in general: res quas prophetæ prædicunt plerumque sistuntur complexe ita ut in universo suo ambitu summatim spectentur vel *κατὰ τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα* (see Theologia Prophetica i. 621, 617, 637; cf. Nitszch System d. christl. Lehre S. 81, Studien u. Kritik, 1843, 53, 54), holds good in the case before us, as follows from the foregoing remarks. For it is not as any particular dreadful famine that Agabus predicts the imminent misfortune, but as one of the many terrible signs and presages which were to precede the great day of the Lord. The famine in the time of Claudius had precisely the same reference to this prophecy, as the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus had to the declaration of Jesus with regard to his coming to judge Jerusalem and the whole world—that is to say, it may possibly be a fulfilment of the prophecy, but still it is only such an one as further points again to another also, and to a final one. In so far, therefore, St Luke was unquestionably right in mentioning the famine under Claudius in this combination. Moreover, there is also no doubt on this point, that he chiefly had in view the one which, according to the narrative of Josephus (Antiq. 20, 2, 5), threatened Jerusalem; only I should not feel justified in saying that the other instances did not here come into consideration;

since, for instance, the famine in the eleventh year of Claudius menaced Rome so fearfully, that in consequence of it the Emperor himself was in danger of his life (Suetonius Claud. c. 18); and Tacitus expressly remarks, that it was looked upon as a very evil omen, and he places it in the same line with many other dismal signs of the universal corruption which was impending (see Annal. xii. 43). The horrors of the famine in Jerusalem and in Rome—those two poles of the *οἰκουμένη*—may well be regarded as a loud knocking of the great day of the Lord on the portals of the world, although, for the former, this day appears merely as a preliminary, and not as the final one.

Inasmuch, then, as we have thus accorded its full force to the significance of a prophecy, which St Luke has deemed worthy of an express mention and description, we have, at the same time, attained this advantage, that we are better and more readily able to understand the leading point, which it is the object of the narrative to conduct us to. Let us try and imagine the natural territory of Paganism in Antioch, and the prophecy of Agabus of the approaching famine falling upon it, as the herald of the great and universal judgment; in that case we must either have made up our minds for light-minded mockery of such a menace, similar to that which Lot heard from the Sodomites, or else we must look for no other result than terror and alarm. What an alteration and change had here taken place, we accordingly see distinctly enough, from the effect which was produced by the prediction of Agabus. As in Jerusalem the announcement by St Peter of the dawning of the last days, did not in the least disturb the peace and joy of the community itself, and also excited alarm among those without its pale (see ii. 43, 47); so was it also in this city. The Church of Antioch is as certain as that of Jerusalem, that by the name of the Lord, they are to be delivered from all the terrors and sufferings of the last days (see ii. 21). But in the former city, the trust in the Lord, amidst all these terrible signs, evinced itself more distinctly and more effectually than it had done in the latter. In the very face of the threatened famine, the Christians in Antioch resolved, every man according to his abilities, to make a contribution for the brethren which dwelt in Judea, and this resolve was actually carried into effect (see vv. 29, 30). Neander (see his Geschichte d. Pflanzung u. s. w. 1,

133) has evidently taken the right view of the matter, when he supposes that this resolution to send help to their brethren in Judea was taken by the Christians in Antioch, before the actual outbreak of the famine. Meyer and Wieseler (see Chronolog. des Apostol. Zeitalters S. 149) maintain, not without doing violence to the text, that the resolution to make a collection for the brethren in Judea, was not made until the threatened famine had actually attacked Judea. But instead of doing this, these learned men ought rather to put the question to themselves, how it was that the people of Antioch, when the prophet had predicted an universal famine, should have been induced to provide for the wants which were beginning to arise among the brethren in Judea. Calvin has long ago asked himself this question, and has also answered it rightly enough. He maintains that the Christians in Antioch strove in this way to testify their gratitude to the Church in Jerusalem, for the kind services which had been done them by the latter, in making known unto them the Gospel. They had already begun to act upon the principle which St Paul afterwards propounded as a general maxim. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your worldly things" (see 1 Cor. ix. 11). Here then we have such an exhibition of feeling and spiritual-mindedness, as was worthy of the metropolis of the Gentile Church. An universal famine had been predicted, and the Christians of Antioch were certainly far from assured against the danger of its attacking themselves; for why was it predicted to them, if there was no probability of its reaching them? But their first thought is not to provide for their own poor, and to take measures for the relief of their own wants, but of all throughout the habitable world who were menaced with this famine; and among them the first object of their solicitude is the people from whom they had received the highest blessing of salvation. In the joy of having acquired this supreme treasure, every one feels freely disposed and willing to offer some portion of all that he possesses; and the whole community considers itself happy in knowing that the brethren in Judea are in such a position as furnishes it with the opportunity to make them some slight return for the inestimable present it had received from their hands. Never has Christian benevolence shewn itself in a more original

and a more striking way than on this occasion. With reference to it, we have further and especially to consider the effect which this gift of love must have had on the community of Jerusalem. With the exception that they had renounced their sinful courses, the Antiochian Christians continued outwardly to live in the same fashion as they had previously done; their conversation, accordingly, was to Jewish conceptions and modes of speaking, "after the manner of the Gentiles" (see Gal. ii. 14); and on this account, there was a gulf of separation between them and the Jews, as partakers of the common faith, which rendered it difficult for the latter especially to maintain sincere union and fellowship with them. Must not, however, this gulf have disappeared as a phantom, and the estrangement have departed like a shadow, when the Christian converts of the circumcision practically experienced, that in their brethren of the uncircumcision there was so strong a feeling and indwelling consciousness of brotherly communion, that on the occasion of a famine which threatened the whole world, they should of their own accord have directed their regards first of all to that little spot from which the tidings of salvation had gone forth? While from the whole of heathendom the Jews had hitherto met with nothing but contempt and persecution, there proceeds from these heathens a service of incomparable love and benevolence towards them. And still more marvellous is the aspect which this modification of the Gentile mind assumes, as soon as the Christians of the circumcision bethink themselves of their own people. From Jerusalem itself they are menaced with destruction and slaughter; whereas from Antioch, the Gentile city, where in former times Antiochus Epiphanes had madly raged against the people of Israel (2 Maccab. vi. 1), there were now brought to them gifts to preserve them alive during the terrors of the famine.

And it is even because this contribution of the Church at Antioch to the brethren in Judea is of such grave importance, that it is mentioned by St Luke in this section, and that it is specially remarked that it was entrusted to the hands of Barnabas and Saul (ver. 30). These two persons were sent with the collection to the elders at Jerusalem. We there learn that in the meanwhile the office of presbyter had been created in the Churches of Judea, after the model of the synagogue (see Rothe,

Anfange d. christl. Kirche. S. 173). The necessity for such a presidential office had arisen as soon indeed as several Churches had been formed in different places throughout the land of Judea, which could not be overlooked by the Apostles themselves, who still continued to reside in Jerusalem. That, moreover, the journey of these two Apostles had Jerusalem for its special object, although it is not expressly so stated, cannot, nevertheless, be doubted, inasmuch as the holy city was the centre of interest for the brethren in Judea. Two circumstances explain why it was that in the opening of his Epistle to the Galatians St Paul makes no mention of this journey to Jerusalem. On the one hand his business on this occasion was not with the Apostles, but only with the elders; and, secondly, up to this time his position was only a subordinate one, as is intimated by the secondary place which his name holds, so that in Jerusalem no preference of any kind was shewn him, and neither had he the least desire to enhance his own authority or to draw attention to himself. If, therefore, Zeller cannot produce any other objection against this journey of St Paul than the silence of the Epistle to the Galatians with regard to it (see Theolog. Jahrb, 1849, 420), this argumentum a silentio becomes to our minds of so much the less weight, the more distinctly we have seen that this journey, together with the occasion which led to it, forms in every respect an integral element in the composition of the work which we are commenting upon.

SECT. 20. THE HOSTILITY IN JUDEA AT ITS HEIGHT—ITS RETRIBUTION.

(Chap. xii. 1—25.)

The universal importance of the rise of the Church in the Gentile city of Antioch is exhibited still more distinctly by the fact, that about the same time the hostility to the Gospel which prevailed in Jerusalem became still more bitter. Nothing could well be added to the intensity of hatred, which in the preceding narrative had already risen to the height of deadly animosity against the disciples of Jesus; but still the power and the autho-

rity which this enmity hitherto could command, were extremely limited. In a moment of wildly infuriated passion, the Sanhedrim had, it is true, allowed itself to be hurried away so far as to devise and to inflict the punishment of death (vii. 54—59); but otherwise it is a fact sufficiently well-known, that the chief officers of the Jews were not invested with the power of life or death (John xviii. 31; conf. Winer bibl. Realworterbuch, 11, 553). Accordingly, it was only by Israel betraying its king into the hands of the heathen that the malice of earth was able to accomplish its designs against the Holy One. But now all that up to this time had been wanting to the malice of the Jews against the Christians—the power to carry its resolves into execution—was furnished to it; and, in fact, we hereupon see it once more succeeding in Jerusalem to the full of its hopes. Completely appropriate, therefore, is the remark of Wettstein on ver. 1: vexatio inceperat a sacerdotibus, continuata a plebe, perfecta a principe.

From the very beginning of this paragraph, it is St Luke's desire to call our attention to the fact, that the events which he is on the point of recording, are to be regarded as contemporaneous with what he had been previously narrating (conf. Wieseler Chronol. d. Apostol. Zeitalters, p. 150—153), a coordination, by means of which it is intended that the contrasts between Antioch and Jerusalem should be placed in still stronger light. Now, it is around the person of king Herod that the interest of all that is set forth in the present section is concentrated from beginning to end. And this is a point consequently that we must keep steadily in view. In order to understand the history of the Herodian family generally, and therefore also that of this Herod Agrippa, it is above all things necessary to understand correctly their genealogy. The ancestor of the Herodian family was, it is well known, Antipater, and he was an Idumean (Joseph. Antiq. xiv. 1, 3). Now, in the history of Israel, Edom maintains, from the first, a very definite character. Edom is Israel's predestined foe (Gen. xxv. 23, 27, 39, 40). And this character is continually manifesting itself. The people which first attacked the ransomed and emancipated Israelites was Idumean; for the Amalekites were of that race (see Exodus xvii. 8, cf. Numb. xxiv. 20). It was for this reason that an oath was taken of deadly enmity against the Amalekites (see Exod.

xvii. 14, 15); and the first task which was enjoined on the king of Israel, was the utter extirpation of these Edomitish Amalekites (see 1 Sam. xv. 1, 3). And just as on Edom's side the same hostile sentiments towards Israel are constantly recurring throughout the Old Testament down to its latest times (see Ezek. xxxv. 15; xxxvi. 5; Obadiah x. 7); so also on Israel's part, the older spirit of the execration of Edom revived again and again (see Psalm cxxxvii. 7; Isaiah xxxiv. 5). It is worthy of remark, as bearing on this relation, that by Hyrcanus, the Idumeans had been forced to adopt circumcision (see Joseph. Antiq. xiii. 9, 1); in this way did these hereditary foes of the Jews become outwardly their friends (*κἀκεῖνος αὐτοῖς χρόνος ὕπηρχεν, ὥστε εἶναι τὸ λοιπὸν Ἰουδαίους* (Joseph. Antiq. xiii. 9, 1), although essentially they still remained what they ever had been (see Joseph. de bell., Jud. vii. 8, 1), and for this reason, even while in this condition, they were called *ἡμιιούδαιοι* (Joseph. Antiq. xiv. 15, 2). By these circumstances, however, it was rendered possible for the Idumeans, without laying aside their hostility to the Jews, to approximate more closely to them, and, by the dynasty of the Herodians, this possibility had been transmuted into a reality pregnant with the gravest consequences for Israel. Herod the Great, the first of this dynasty, came into contact first of all with Cassius, and managed to win his favour (see Joseph. Antiq. xiv. 11, 2). And when afterwards Antony arrived in Bithynia, Herod contrived by money to secure his sanction (see ibid. xiv. 12, 2) and patronage, and so contrived matters that Antony confirmed him in the possession of the throne (see ibid. xiv. 13, 2). By similar means, and at a later period, he also won over Octavian to his designs, and in this way succeeded, during his residence at Rome, in obtaining through the intervention of Antony and Octavian, a decree of the Senate, by which he was installed king of Judea (see ibid. xiv. 14, 4[1]).

[1] If there is need of pointing out an external motive, which may have led the Jews to apply the name of Edom to Rome (see Buxtorf. Lex. Talm. p. 29—32; Othon. Lex. Rabbin. p. 532), we may suppose that such was furnished by this connection of the Herodian dynasty with the Roman Empire. Moreover, this use of the name of Edomite, on the part of the synagogue, is in any case a proof that, in the mind of Israel, a consciousness of the true nature of an Edomite survived in

In this way a monarchy was set up in Israel, which, in all its features, was the very reverse of all that the law of God had ordained with respect to such a kingdom. The king of Israel, it was written in the law, was to be one taken from the midst of the people, and a stranger was expressly excluded from this jurisdiction (see Deut. xvii. 15). Herod, it is true, is, according to all outward appearances, a Jew, but in his essence an Edomite—one of the first-fruits of the Gentiles (see Numb. xxiv. 20). The king of Israel was, according to the law, to attain to this high dignity, by the choice of Jehovah, and the installation of the people (see ibid.). But here Herod is made king of the Jews by the will and decree of a secular power. The externally brilliant condition of Jewish affairs gives him, it is true, the necessary courage to ascribe the source and origin of his authority to the will of God (see Joseph. Antiq. xv. 11, 1); and since he himself bore the sign of circumcision, he addresses the Jews as his brethren, and speaks of their forefathers as if they were also his own (Joseph Antiq. ibid.). The king of Israel ought to keep the law of God before his eyes, in order to be able to walk in its ordinances, and to turn from it neither to the right hand nor to the left (see Deut. xvii. 18—20). But from the multitude of atrocities and murders with which the life of this king is stained, it is quite obvious that he never entertained even the remotest idea of fulfilling the duties thus incumbent on a king of Israel. But in order that even in an age, when the moral judgment was utterly blunted, and retained its severity for none but ceremonial matters, no doubt might exist, as to the true character of this Edomitish sovereignty, Herod, from the very beginning of his reign, had in the most extraordinary manner laid aside everything like a regard for Jewish opinions and customs in religious matters (see Joseph. Antiq. xv. 8, 1). But he managed to furnish a counterpoise to this, his notorious heathen frivolity, and in this most delicate matter contrived to give the lie to the general opinion. He undertook to restore the temple of Zerubabel to the same height of majesty and splendour as that of Solomon—a work

full vigour, down to the most recent times; and we have therefore even so much the more ground to ascribe some weight to the origin of the Herodians.

which he extolled to the Jews as a mark of the most eminent piety (see Joseph. xv. 11, 1). And, indeed, he actually brought it about, that upon the completion of this building, the people celebrated the event with great rejoicings and a festival, in imitation of all that had been formerly done in Solomon's time (see 1 Kings viii. 62—66; see Joseph. ibid. xv. 11, 6). According to all this, therefore, this Edomitish dynasty in Israel was in every respect the very opposite to that which God had appointed, and yet it contrived in every matter to give to its manifest defiance of the law a good and pious appearance.

There is no doubt that we have to see in this monarchy a new and peculiar phase of the powers of this world. St Luke has carefully noted the fact, that the coming into the world of the Heavenly King was coincident with the first exercise of a complete act of sovereignty over the land of Judea, on the part of him in whom the empire of Rome for the first assumed a personal shape (see Luke ii. 1). Although unquestionably the power of this earthly potentate was not without influence in the existence of the Heavenly King, still his hostility was as yet asleep and concealed. The open and actual hostility of the powers of this world against Him who was called to destroy them, is, on the other hand, represented by Herod. Herod, for instance, was, as we have seen, king of the Jews, and reigned in the city of David; but his sovereignty was based not on the choice of the God in heaven, but on the favour of the god of this world. For all the grants, from the very first, which Herod had received from the Roman potentates, were confirmed and ratified by Augustus, who took occasion on Herod's second visit to Rome to place anew the diadem on his head (see Joseph. Antiq. xv. 6, 7; Tacit. Hist. v. 9). This Edomitish vassal of the Roman emperor was he who sought to take the life of the new-born king of the Jews (see Matt. ii. 13, 20), and thereby bewrayed in a most unquestionable manner his internal character. If we look back upon the earlier times we shall then be able to recognize in him a new shape of the world's empire. In the times of the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Greek empires, the hostility of the world against the kingdom of God rested chiefly on this, that these empires would and could abide with no public body along side of themselves which had its own ordinances and practices opposed to

the pre-eminence of the world. Now, however, when the King of Heaven has made his appearance on earth, and coincidently therewith the kingdom of the Spirit has been set up, the hostility does not, indeed, first shew itself there where the empire of the world mantains itself as such; but there where the mundane empire appears under the guise of a Heavenly one—not in Rome but at Jerusalem.

The same character that we have traced in the reign and person of Herod the Great is still maintained by Herod Antipas. He received the sovereignty over Galilee and Perœa, not so much by the nomination of his father as by the will of the Roman emperor (ubi. supra xvii. 11, 4). Herod Antipas was the man who laid hands on the Baptist (see Matt. xiv. 4 sq.), although he knew that he was a man of God (see Luke ix. 7—9), and it was the same person, who, on the day of his passion, so brutally set Jesus at nought (see Luke xxiii. 8—11). But this essential character of the world's empire was still further unfolded and manifested in the third Herod—Herod Agrippa—the one of whom mention is made in the present section. He had been brought up in Rome at the court of the Emperor Tiberius (see Josephus Antiq. xviii. 6, 1), and from the Emperor Caligula received first of all the grants of the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias with the title of King (see ibid. xviii. 6, 10), as, also, subsequently, the tetrarchy of Antipas (see ibid. xix. 8, 2), and finally, by the Emperor Claudius, was set over the whole territory that had formerly been subject to the rule of Herod the Great (ibid. xix. 5, 1). Now the latter made it his first object to gain the good-will and affections of the Jews, and as he daily observed all the ceremonies of religion (ibid. xix. 6, 1), and was besides of a mild temper and disposition, he succeeded in this object (see ibid. xix. 7, 3, 4). Moreover, with all this, he was extremely luxurious (see ibid. xviii. 8, 7), and made no scruple to introduce into the city of Israel theatres and amphitheatres, gladiatorial games and musical festivals (see ibid. xix. 7, 5). Since, then, the position of Herod outwardly and externally was the same, his mild temperament could not prevent him, upon the first opportunity that presented itself, from staining his hands with blood as his predecessors had done.

Nay, the fact that it was precisely in the reign of this third

Herod that this hostility to the kingdom of Heaven reached its greatest height, shews clearly enough that the principle of this enmity dwelt not so much in the persons of these rulers as rather in the peculiar character of their dynasty. "Herod the king," St Luke tells us, "stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church." He sees no necessity of adducing any motive for such conduct, inasmuch as to his mind there was a sufficient motive for it in the personal circumstances of Herod. For, on the one side stands Herod, the grandson and inheritor of that persecutor of the child Jesus, and the nephew of the king who had beheaded John the Baptist, and had mocked at Jesus in the midst of His sufferings and humiliation, the descendant of the Edomite invested with the power and authority of the Roman Empire; on the other, the disciples of Him who claimed to be the true king of Israel, and who enjoined His subjects not only to render unto Ceasar the things that are Ceasar's, but also to God the things that are God's—a command in which His followers had already had opportunity for shewing their sense of obedience (see v. 29). But that by this time the animosity of the world had become more intense, we see especially from the fact that St Luke presently goes on to add: "he killed James the brother of John with the sword" (ver. 2). To the Sanhedrim and the people of the Jews the faithful witness Stephen had fallen a sacrifice, but Herod, the vassal of Rome, and of the empire of the world, dared to lay his hand even on the holy and elect twelve. The fact that hitherto the Apostles had been preserved amidst the persecutions which had assailed the Church at Jerusalem must not be so understood as implying that the Lord designed always to protect them as the indispensable instruments of His purpose and work. In this case it becomes immediately evident that when once the original awe which had surrounded the Apostles had disappeared and had given place to hatred and animosity, it was not His purpose to controul the evil counsels and malice of their enemies, any more than when His own hour was come He had refused to allow the powers of darkness and wickedness to vent all their malice against himself. Accordingly, the victim of Herod is not any one merely of the twelve, but even one of the three, whom, on so many occasions, he had honoured above the rest (Matt. xvii. 1; Luke viii. 51; Mark xiv. 33), one of the

two sons of Zebedee to whom the Lord had given a special promise (Matt. xx. 20—23). We have already seen that on the murder of the first martyr, the victory over death was set forth and realized in a way not to be mistaken, and we have recognized therein a special manifestation of the power and glory of the Lord. Judging from this circumstance we should the more expect when an Apostle who had received a far more direct call than the Deacon Stephen ever had to exhibit to the world the glory of Jesus, was doomed to suffer death, that this mortal suffering would be undergone in such a way as should, in the presence of the whole people, preach more impressively, and proclaim more effectually than any course of action or any eloquence ever could, the triumphant power of the Saviour. It seems as if we were still more justified in entertaining this expectation by the fact that as yet we have not received the slightest information as to the labours of this Apostle who was to be the first to suffer death. We might, perhaps, feel ready to adopt the conclusion that the vocation of an Apostle—nay, of one of the three who were, on many occasions, preferred to the others, and in truth, of one of the two sons of Zebedee—could not be truly looked upon as fulfilled unless his death furnished the occasion for an Apostolical testimony. It must, therefore, cause us very great surprise to find that in this incident all is different; nay, indeed, the very reverse of what took place on the occasion of St Stephen's death. The narrative of the latter event sets forth first of all, and at length, the impressive address of Stephen, with which, in the presence of the whole Sanhedrim, he sets the seal to all his previous labours; it then attends him from moment to moment up to the very door of death, and shews us how, in this case, whatever there was of dark and terrible was transmuted into light and glory by the Lord in Heaven who rules and governs all things. Now, of all this we find literally nothing in the account of this Apostle's death. With three words we have the whole incident recounted—the first death in the Apostolic body, and that too by the sword of Herod, and these three words depict the absolutely silent suffering of death. If, then, we were arbitrarily to conjecture in what way the Apostle, by his last words, by his whole bearing and appearance, gave testimony to his faith, we should, by such thoughts, compromise the truth and objective

fidelity of our book. For how could it possibly be that he who had narrated all the minutest particulars which accompanied the death of Stephen, and tended to glorify the faith, should have omitted to leave us any details of the same nature connected with the Apostle's death if there had really been any to tell? Who in the world could be satisfied with the supposition that the sources of information, which flowed so abundantly in the former case, were in the latter dried up? Is it likely that St Luke would have remained content without continuing to examine and inquire, until he had fully and perfectly informed himself of every detail—especially as in his circumstances this could not have been a difficult task, for we are told that he resided for a considerable period in Palestine (see xxvii. 1)? That tradition should have attempted to supply the supposed gap left by the silence of St Luke (see Euseb. h. e. ii. 9), has no other effect with us than to render us more alive to the significance of this silence. In fact we here arrive at a satisfactory conclusion only by supposing that St Luke, throughout his history, reports faithfully, and according to the true state of the case—by assuming consequently in the case before us that precisely this very report which is utterly silent as to any deeds or speech of the Apostle, is in perfect agreement with the reality, and that James, the very reverse of Stephen, met his bloody end quite like an ordinary being, without any special or singular signs accompanying it.

And it is precisely while we look upon this incident in the very light it is here depicted in, and while we keep this view of it distinctly before our eyes, that whatever in it seems strange and inconsistent will soonest disappear; and even in this absolute silence, and in this total want of any marked phenomena accompanying the first martyrdom of an Apostle as here related, we shall be able to discern glimpses of a hidden and secret glory which will give us an inkling of something far greater than anything that was presented to our minds by the martyrdom of St Stephen. In the former instance we see more clearly than ever before, in what degree the Lord of Heaven gives free scope and play to the powers of wickedness on earth. Not only does He allow the enemy of His kingdom to sit upon the throne of David, but He also permits him to do violence to the Apostolate, the mightiest and most precious instrument that He had devised on

earth and to destroy it in the person of its most eminent representatives. He therefore makes it apparent that He is ready to give up to the rulers of this world that part of his kingdom which is rooted amidst the external things of this world, among which, according to our preceding exposition, the Apostolical office stands pre-eminently. So earnest was He even in the height of Heaven with this self-renunciation, that with all His kingdom on earth He claimed not so much of it as a foot's breadth ; but surrendered it to him, to whom it had been given over by the Father until the appointed day of refreshing. But even in this deep profundity of a perfectly unpretending self-renunciation, is He preparing and bringing about the majesty and glory of His eternal kingdom. Thus receiving perfect freedom and liberty of action from love leaving it to itself, the flesh experiences its own weakness and its incapacity to attain at any time and in the slightest degree to self-deliverance. But in proportion, therefore, as it renounces all idea of this ultimate possibility, it must look upon itself as eternally justified. The final redemption of that which was lost, and the final judgment on that which was condemned, rests upon this self-renunciation of the Lord, which, in the death of James is brought forward so significantly for all ages of the Church upon earth.

Moreover, to the eye of faith this hidden glory of the Lord is brightly reflected in the way that James receives this abandonment of himself. We have, that is, to take it for granted, as self-evident that James surrendered himself without opposition to this, the will of His Lord, and accordingly we must assume that in him all carnal volition and desire were to such an extent overcome and laid to sleep, that he was able to bring into subjection to the will of the Lord even that will of his own which was directed to whatever was best and most exalted—even the exercise of His Apostolical calling and testimony ; and that in this way he was endowed with power to undergo the pains of a violent death patiently and without a murmur. And this was that cup of pure and perfect self-renunciation of which, at one time, the sons of Zebedee and their mother had no idea (see Matt. xx. 22—23). But now by the Spirit of Jesus, James has been thoroughly changed; and now it is possible for this cup to be presented unto him, and he has drunk it in order to receive the louder praise from the

mouth of his heavenly Lord, the more profound and the deeper is the silence which on earth has fallen upon him.

Since, then, at the very first collision between the empire of the world and the Church of Christ, the antagonism of these two kingdoms blazed up at once so violently as the murder of James testifies, it is clearly to be foreseen that this contest will have to pass through various stages. In the end therefore of this paragraph a sketch of the further history of this Herod is given by St Luke in order that the subsequent ages of the developement of the Church might derive both instruction and consolation from these beginnings of its history. First of all St Luke describes to us the design which Herod had formed against St Peter. Because he saw that the murder of St James was well received by the Jews, he took Peter also with the intention of bringing him forth to the people after the feast of the Passover, and then to pass sentence of death upon him (vv. 3, 4). In this instance we see then that in his hostile deportment towards the Christian community, Herod, among other motives, was essentially influenced by the opinions of the Jewish people. The motive which first disposed him to put St James to death must, in any case, be looked for in the irreconcileable antagonism between the kingdom of the Herodian family and the kingdom of Christ. For when with respect to a deed already perpetrated it is said of its author that when he saw "it pleased the people," this clearly implies the existence of a different motive, which had already impelled him to action. In the case of Peter, however, with the pride which is inherent in secular authority as such, and to which nothing is so hateful as that power of conscience which, upon the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, was established in perfect stedfastness, there is now associated, we find, a deference for the opinions of the Jewish people, as a co-operating element in the hostility to the Church. This fact serves at once to convince us that the secular power which is here brought before us is one to which it is essential to mask itself under a spiritual element. For the regard which Herod here pays to the people had one object chiefly in view. By adopting the religious ideas and customs of the Jews he hoped to gain the voice of the people. As for the satisfaction which the Jews may have felt in the death of St James, we know besides that it could have had no other ground than their wild fanaticism.

And this fanaticism had gone on increasing to such a degree that by the time of the death of the Apostle the whole nation had reached the point which, at the martyrdom of Stephen, was held by Saul of Tarsus alone (viii. 1). This Jewish fanaticism, therefore, is adopted as a motive by Herod Agrippa, and thereby completes the Edomitish character of his kingdom, while he endeavours to destroy in this way the kingdom of the son of David. It was evidently intended that the business of St Peter's trial should be as solemn and public as possible, in order to invest and to cover with this semblance of righteousness the hostility against the Church. And we also reckon among the same characteristic traits of this proceeding the regard that is paid to the Paschal Feast. Herod, for instance, holds as sacred the rule of Jewish tradition die festo non judicant [Kuton Moed v. 2], and on this account postpones the passing sentence of death upon Peter until after the Feast. But inasmuch as in the meantime he casts Peter into prison, he again exhibits himself in the true character of the Roman Edomite. For he entrusted the safe custody of the Apostle to four captains of the watch, of whom each was in command of four soldiers (ver. 4). The references which are given by Wettstein prove that this was a peculiar custom of the military discipline of the Romans. The pious Jew therefore even in the very matter in which the harsh unfriendly aspect of the Roman power is pre-eminently noticeable—even in his military discipline is genuinely Roman.

In the meanwhile prayer is made unceasingly to God for Peter (ver. 5). Upon a review of all the signs and wonders which had surrounded the first Christian community, we might easily be induced to think that the first Christians could scarcely have ever had the feeling of any real and urgent need, so long as it had seen the order and coherence of nature interrupted at every moment in their behalf. But even if we did not otherwise know that the divine miracles properly understood, could not on any occasion, and at any time, have exercised so unnatural an influence, we should certainly have in the death of James a most powerful antidote to the formation of any such morbid notions. With this removal of our Apostolical martyr, who, in silence and retirement, is put to death by the hand of the secular power, an intimation was given to the whole community, that as

long as their career in this life lasted, they were not to look for any extraordinary and special immunity from evil and from suffering: but that, on the contrary, in the patient endurance of the injustice and wickedness which is in the world, they were to recognise no small part of their vocation. On the other hand, by means of this event, the truth must have been brought home to the mind of the community, that the miraculous powers, which had been lent to them for the subjugation of evil, were only to be regarded as signs intended to point out the intimacy of that communion which subsisted between the Lord of Heaven and His Church. These miraculous powers, when they have fulfilled this object, are so far from constituting any law for the historical development, that it is intended rather that they should disappear altogether or cease, in order that this communion should attain to perfection in the inner man, with a view to appearing one day under an outward manifestation, and to make that which in the beginning had occurred only in individual signs, a permanent condition of perfect and everlasting glory.

It was consequently quite natural, and indeed inevitable, that the Church, as soon as it heard St Peter had been cast into prison by the very man by whose sword St James had just perished, should be plunged in great distress and anxiety. Not only did they participate in the feeling common and natural to mankind, which regards as totally lost the life of a defenceless being when menaced by the supreme power; they knew that the temporal power and authority owed to the Lord Himself its very continuance and free exercise even in its hostile measures against the Church of Christ. But precisely that which sharpened the feeling of danger from the side of the temporal power, furnished at the same time the consolation and relief of their bitter sorrow and anguish. If the sword of Herod had gained its power over the life of St James, not so much by his own might as by the sufferance of the Lord, still the community feels that it is not any blind or fatalistic power to which it is given up, no, nor even to the insensible and imperturbable course of natural things, but to the will of their Lord, in and by whom alone the powers of the world exist, and who inflicts suffering on the Church. But with their Lord the community feels that they are in the fellowship of love, and accordingly they not only venture to make

their cares and sorrows known unto Him, but also in unceasing prayer, they intercede with Him for the precious life of the Apostle. It is evidently the wish of St Luke that we should look upon this incessant prayer of the Church as the cause why the fate of St Peter took so different an issue from that of St James. On this account, by means of the adversative particle δὲ he opposes the might of the unceasing prayer of the community to all the might which King Herod might employ for the safe custody of the Apostle in prison (ver. 5).

Evidently, therefore, it is the object of St Luke, circumstantially and palpably to exhibit how the profound but secret might of the prayers of the suffering Church gradually made itself felt amidst external things, and completely dissolved and annihilated that power which set itself up as absolute, and without rival. The days of the feast of the Passover—that holy commemoration of the redemption of Israel—were over, and yet the new Israel, which, like the old Israel in former times, felt that it was given up a prey to the secular power, had not, with its cry of agony, gained a hearing. And the meantime the dreaded day on which Peter was to be brought forth before the people as a sacrifice to the zeal of the Jews, was already at hand. Their anxiety is excited to the highest pitch. A single night forms alone the thin wall of partition between the life of the Apostle and his death. To the eye of man all hope of help has disappeared; this night Peter is lying between two soldiers, bound by two chains, in a prison surrounded by guards (ver. 6). However, the anxiety of the community, having once taken the road of agonising prayer, now does but offer up still more fervent prayer, and precisely this last and extremely earnest intercession brings about the desired fulfilment.

A messenger from Heaven enters the prison, and light suddenly lit up the darkness thereof. Smiting him on his side, the angel awakens Peter. (ver. 7). Peter himself, therefore, had on this night abandoned himself to sleep, and so little idea had he of any miraculous deliverance, that even in the midst of its accomplishment he thought he saw a vision (ver. 9). From these statements we infer that he had already surrendered all hope of life, and had prepared himself to walk in the footsteps of his fellow-apostle, St James, and to follow in the holy track of

his Lord and Master. And this fact does but the more strongly confirm our impression, that the prayers of the community must be regarded as the ultimate cause of this turn of affairs. It is this intercession that influenced the will of the Lord. Just as it was He who gave to the sword of Herod power over the life of James, so the same Lord now exerted His heavenly might; and before it all the forces which Herod had put forth to secure the person of Peter, sunk in one moment into nothing. The binding chains fall off from his hands (ver. 7), and in order that the supremacy of the Divine messenger over the omnipotence of Herod might fully appear, St Peter must not escape merely with his life but with every article of his attire; with his sandals on his feet, and with his girdle about his loins, and his garment about his shoulders; in the full splendour of that Heavenly light must he go forth from the grasp of Herod. In order that we may see how within the prison, and surrounded by these men of war, the Heavenly messenger assures to St Peter the most perfect security and repose, all these circumstances are minutely detailed to us (ver. 8). After this we are told how they passed through the first and second wards without being at all perceived, and how, in the next place, the iron gate, which formed the last barrier between the prison of Peter and the liberty of the city, opened to them of its own accord, and how, finally, the angel did not leave Peter until he had led him through one street, and had consequently restored him to perfect liberty and safety (ver. 10).

Now, since Luke has permitted us to take a glance at the community in this same night, we see them still persevering in prayer, of which naturally the danger of death which menaced St Peter formed the chief subject, and we perceive that they were as much surprised at his deliverance as the Apostle himself. With graphic vividness is the scene brought before us of the Christians assembled in the house of Mary, who cannot bring themselves to believe the maiden announcing to them with exceeding joy the arrival of St Peter (vv. 12—16). Thus we have here an actual confirmation of the fact that the prayer and faith of the Church by no means destroys or interferes with its convictions with regard to the world or to secondary causes. It is evidently under the conviction that the power of this world, even in its hostile tendency against the kingdom of God, is really a power,

that St Luke has throughout composed this narrative of the miraculous deliverance of St Peter out of the hands of this power; as also he takes for granted that he will have such readers as do indeed feel convinced that soldiers and chains, and prisons with their doors and bolts, which are at the command of powers of this world, possess no terrible or menacing power over the Church of Christ, if only it steadily keep in view the great truth that the Lord in Heaven can annihilate all these forces when, where, and how He pleases. On the one hand the giving up of St James to be its victim, and on the other, the deliverance of St Peter, and the hostility of the world in the opposite scale, enable us to discern what is the Heavenly and gracious will of the Lord with regard to His disciples in the long course of time, while they exhibit the Church maintaining in due proportion a holy fear and a blessed confidence, and a healthy admixture of a consciousness of the power of God and also of the power of the world.

It could not well fail but that such deeply searching and instructive experiences would effect a progress in the internal development of the Church. St Luke has not omitted to call our attention to this fact also. How striking is the conduct of Peter after his liberation! We might have expected that the Apostle would have rested a while in the house of Mary, where he had found a numerous assemblage of Christians, and have narrated at length the circumstances of his miraculous deliverance, in order to stimulate the whole assembly to one common feeling of joy and gratitude, and that then, on the next day, he would have communicated to the whole Church the fact of the wonderful assistance which the Lord had vouchsafed to render him. But of all this we learn the direct contrary. The assembly in the house of Mary does not (in the narrative) recover from its first impression of surprise; so hurried, so solemn, so earnest, is the appearance of St Peter. After he had narrated to them the fact of his deliverance he goes on to say: "Go shew these things unto James and the brethren." Thereupon he departed and betook himself to another place (ver. 17). This "other place" is probably neither another place of meeting for the Christians, nor another house in Jerusalem, as De Wette conjectures, for the going in such a case would scarcely be expressed by ἐπορεύθη,

and besides, in such a case, St Peter would not have thought it necessary to commission them to report his deliverance to James and the brethren, for if he had remained in Jerusalem, he would probably have had an opportunity of seeing them himself. What then is it that makes Peter be in such haste, and drives him to leave Jerusalem? Kühnöl and Meyer suppose it was the wish to remove to a place of security. But is Peter then rescued from the hand of Herod only to give way to fear and to considerations of personal safety? In any case a removal from the city on such a night as this from mere personal considerations, would scarcely be a pardonable prudence, but an act of cowardly anxiety, such as generally it is impossible to suppose Peter guilty of, and especially at a moment like this. Evidently some better reason, if we can discover it, would be very acceptable. And in fact it does not lie very far off.

On the Feast of Pentecost Peter had announced to the house of Israel the beginning of the last days, and had declared that that people were first called to receive the eternal deliverance from the sufferings of those last times. Since then what had been the experience of Peter? First of all there had arisen on the part of the highest authorities in Israel a persecution against the very name of Jesus. Subsequently the whole people had allowed itself to be drawn into the same sentiments with regard to that holy name; and Jerusalem had been stained with the blood of the first martyr. But even after all this Peter still clung to Jerusalem as the station assigned to the Apostles, as long as some tokens of grace for Israel were not wanting. But never had the billows of hatred and animosity to the Gospel risen so high in Jerusalem as they had in all that he had so lately had experience of. The people had of late acquired a new political unity in Herod, and was thereby in a position, if only a harmony of sentiment could once be established between the one supreme head and the whole body, to work out its principles the more surely, and the more rapidly to carry its purposes into execution. Its present kingly head was, it is true, originally of Edom, and he does not at all belie its hostile character to the kingdom of God, and it is precisely in this point of bloody hatred to God's kingdom that the people, befooled by the false semblance of a

zeal for the law, is in perfect harmony with its kingly head. It had found pleasure in the death of James, and was looking forward with great expectation and delight to the approaching spectacle of Peter's sufferings (ver. 11). Thus had Jerusalem, the holy city, been as Sodom and as Egypt (see Revel. xi. 8). And while in this way Jerusalem was, by hasty steps, to become a kingdom of the world opposed to the kingdom of God; the soldiers of the imperial capital of the world—as Peter had learned from personal experience at Cesarea—not only feared and sought after God but were also accepted of Him by an express declaration of His good pleasure. And, moreover, tidings had reached him that in another imperial city—Antioch—whole multitudes of the Gentiles had turned unto God, and were bringing forth noble fruits of the renewing Spirit. These thoughts run through Peter's soul, and convince him that the time has now arrived when the tie that bound the Apostles to Jerusalem must be broken, and when they, for their parts, must go into the great harvest-field of the Gentiles now thrown open to them. He also, it is true, knows full well that the course which the Lord had beforehand pointed out for the twelve to follow from Jerusalem, even through Judea and Samaria unto the ends of the earth, has not been retained; it escaped him not that the further dissemination of the Gospel, not, indeed, from converted but from anti-Christian Jerusalem, demands and requires other Apostolical powers—nay, that of such it has already received an abundance; but then, even if the twelve are not to be the first labourers in this field of the Gentiles, still they must not presume to refuse to labour in it, though it should be only as the second, or it might be as even the last in importance. This, at all events, had become quite clear to him, that, viz., after such abominations Jerusalem neither could nor ought to be the peculiar and permanent resting-place of the Apostles.

Peter, therefore, is unwilling to remain another night in Jerusalem, in the same way as Jesus, after pronouncing the sentence of judgment upon Jerusalem, refused to abide there a single night longer (see Mark xi. 11). From this it by no means follows that Peter wished to leave Jerusalem for ever. This hasty, nocturnal departure was simply a token of a change having taken place in the relations subsisting between the Apostles and Jerusalem. If,

therefore, at a later period Peter again makes his appearance in this city, still the relation in which he stood to it had been altered, and we shall also, in the further course of this history, have occasion to trace this change. The fact that the place to which Peter retired is not named, is an intimation that what this retirement was designed primarily to manifest was merely of negative import. If Peter had been in the same case as Paul, then his removal from Jerusalem would have become immediately a definite mission unto "afar off" (see Acts xxii. 21). On this ground, therefore, the opinion of the Romanists, who look upon Rome as having been the unnamed locality to which Peter betook himself, is the very widest from the truth.

It is now then that the charge which Peter laid on the assembled Christians, in the house of Mary, becomes intelligible. Wherefore were they to make this communication to James and the brethren? There could have been no reason at all for it unless Peter was going to leave Jerusalem immediately. But again this departure cannot be understood unless we can refer it to its true cause. But now the very cause which determines Peter to quit Jerusalem existed in equal force for the other Apostles. But are we to suppose that none other of the Apostles but Peter, and James the brother of John, were at this time present in Jerusalem? Such an idea is not at all probable; for Luke, who in chap. viii. 1, had, evidently of design, recorded so emphatically the fact of the Apostles remaining in the city, would not have allowed the departure of the greater number to have taken place without remark, when he had occasion to speak of two of them as still resident there. We will suppose, then, that the rest of the Apostles were still present. In such a case the most natural course for Peter would have been to have laid this commission on them, unless, indeed, the same necessity which drove him from Jerusalem, affected them likewise; and they in that case would not have been able to carry his message to the whole body of the brethren who, by their intercessions and prayers, had procured his liberation. On these grounds we are led to infer that if, together with that of the whole body of Christians, a single name is pre-eminently mentioned in reference to this commission, it was intended that we should not understand by that name an Apostle, but some one else. And this expectation perfectly corresponds

with what we learn from other quarters of the James here spoken of. As James, the brother of John, had been removed from the number of the Apostles, then in a different combination of things it would have been the most obvious course to look upon the James thus brought before us without any further description as being the other James who, in distinction from the son of Zebedee, is usually described as the son of Alpheus. Especially as from other passages of the New Testament besides the one now before us, it appears that after the decease of James, the son of Zebedee, one James alone is in anyway remarkable in the times of the Apostles. Now, with the ideas usually entertained of the efficiency of the Apostle's labours, it becomes almost necessary to hold that this James was the second Apostle of that name. However, in the course of our narrative we have found it more than once necessary to correct these ideas, and essentially to modify them in suchwise as to maintain that it is quite conceivable if an Apostle should retire into the back-ground and disappear entirely from the scene, and if a total silence should be observed with regard to him both by tradition and by the history which traced the general development of the Church in its earliest periods. And in fact accurate investigation with respect to this James, who remained behind in Jerusalem, leads us to conclude that he was a different person from James the less, the Apostle. St Paul, for instance, mentions in conjunction with St Peter at Jerusalem, another Apostolic man whom he calls James the brother of the Lord (Gal. i. 19). As then the same Apostle, in a similar context, mentions a James together with Peter and John (see Gal. ii. 9), and as from chronological reasons it is quite clear that this cannot be James the son of Zebedee, we have every reason for assuming that the latter must be no other than the one previously spoken of and designated as the brother of the Lord. And among the brethren of the Lord who are mentioned in the Gospels, we do actually meet with a James, Matt. xiii. 55. Inasmuch then as His brethren were disbelieving (see John vii. 5), James the Lord's brother belonged not to the number of the Apostles. However, in the beginning of the Acts we are expressly informed that the brethren of Jesus had joined themselves to the company of the Apostles (see i. 14). Now, when we dwell the while on the course of develop-

ment followed by the Church as it is laid before us in the history of the Acts, we can very well suppose that James, originally unbelieving, but subsequently converted to the faith, might assume a very prominent position in the Church. According then to these considerations, the James who, after the death of James the son of Zebedee stands so prominently forward in Jerusalem, was not the second Apostle of that name (for he, on the contrary, retires together with the rest of the Apostles from the authentic records of the Apostolical age into that dark obscurity which overwhelms the latest labours of the Apostles), but James the Lord's brother who, having been previously unbelieving, was probably converted to the faith by the resurrection of the Lord, and afterwards took a leading and active part in the Church at Jerusalem. In further confirmation of this view with regard to James I may, I think, venture to refer to the extensive and accurate investigations of Schaff (Das Verhaltniss Jacobus des Bruders des Herrn zu Jacobus Alphäi, Berlin 1842, and with it we must compare the remarks of Uhlhorn in the Göttinger Anzeiger 1851 Sept).

This perfectly independent result corresponds now to what is required by the passage before us. If this is James, the Lord's brother, then the Apostles, as we naturally expect, remained totally unconnected with what here concerns the community at Jerusalem. With perfect confidence Peter trusts that his fellow-Apostles will be able to understand the signs of the times, and especially to appreciate the motives of his own solemn departure from Jerusalem. He takes it for granted, therefore, that even supposing that all of them might not like himself feel bound to quit the anti-Christian city, yet no one would maintain the position they had previously occupied relatively to Jerusalem and the Church there. Accordingly, when he directs his charge to James and the brethren, a hint is thereby given us that he assumes that James, the Lord's brother, would understand this withdrawal of the Apostles from Jerusalem, and would be ready to undertake the superintendence of the community. This commission contains, therefore, the positive compensation for the withdrawal of Peter which was the signal of the dissolution of the ties that had hitherto bound the Apostles to Jerusalem.

Now it has altogether the appearance as if the present section

would close with this issue of the conflict which Herod Agrippa had given rise to, and yet in a kind of appendix all sorts of foreign matters connected with the person of Herod are communicated. It has been commonly assumed, and Eusebius even has advanced the view (see H. E. ii. 10) that the true object of this appendix is to point to the death of Herod as the punishment of his offences against the Church of Christ. But in the context of our history there exists no motive in and by itself for giving an account of Herod's awful death. For in this respect there is shown a very great difference between the position assumed by the sacred history, and that of the liber de mortibus persecutorum. It is not from the New Testament, but from Josephus, that we learn the fearful end of Herod the Great, whose murderous design is narrated by Matthew, and also the mournful termination of the career of Herod Antipas, whose cruel treatment of John the Baptist is recorded by the evangelists. The circumstance, therefore, that the death of Herod Agrippa is here recorded must, however, have had some special ground and reason. Moreover, if the exclusive object of the narrative had been to depict the death of Herod as the penalty of his persecution of the Apostles, to what end in that case serve the minute details regarding the soldiers, the relations with Tyre and Sidon, and Blastus the chamberlain? It has indeed become a matter of habit to look upon the Acts of the Apostles as a mere collection of smaller or greater narratives concerning the Apostolical times, and under this impression to abandon all its claims to any thing like a solid or methodical coherence; or otherwise it would never have been possible to advance such a theory concerning this close of the persecution. But lastly (and this is the most startling circumstance of all), how can the connection between the persecution of the Apostles by Herod and his terrible death, be the leading idea in this passage, when his disregard of God's glory, and not his persecution of His ministers, is expressly alleged to be the cause of his punishment? (ver. 23). Thus, then, does the passage itself demonstrate that the thread by which an attempt has been made to connect the conclusion in question with the preceding narrative is a mere idle conceit. The question therefore again recurs on all sides: What possible meaning can belong, in the present combination, to the remarks here

given on the actions and policy of Herod as well as on his death?

It is with the passage in question, as with many other larger and smaller portions of Scripture which are pushed aside as being totally unconnected, or which the overweening self-sufficiency of modern criticism dares even to reject altogether. The misconception by which such portions of holy writ are involved, has its ground not in themselves, but in the defective subjectivity of the views taken of them, inasmuch as the scheme, which is usually adopted as a standard, is not drawn from Scripture itself, but from some system which comes far short of, or rather directly contradicts Scripture. Consequently in all such cases the problem is to point out and to correct by such passages themselves the incompleteness or falsehood of the scheme and of the system, and then the value of such passages attains to a general estimation in the very opposite sense. For while such passages are in general left in the utmost possible disregard, they above all others very often contain even heavenly materials for the correction of what is faulty, and for the acquisition of what is desirable. In the section before us, we have been made acquainted with the expressions and the doings of those hostile to the Christian Church and its teachers. The subjective source of this hostility is now spoken of at the close; but in such wise that it is difficult, nay, impossible, to discover its reference to the principles of this hostility. Now, must not this difficulty and impossibility have its source in the conception, which, without the guidance of Scripture itself, but rather through the fault of our own narrow point of view, we have formed of the existing hostility against those who carried the tidings of the Gospel? That the Christian community has to suffer hatred and hostility in the world is unquestionably a prevalent idea; moreover, the notion is no less extensively current and equally vivid, that this enmity and hatred will not decrease, but rather will go on continually augmenting. If, now, we proceed further to inquire into the source of this opposition, the answer is ready at hand: it is nothing else than the love of the world, the worldly temper which will never cease to exist as long as the world lasts; but on the contrary is already on the increase, and will only reach to its height towards the end of the world. Nay, people go even

further still, and following the precedent of St John (1 St John ii. 16) try to realize this worldly element by calling it the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and an evil life (1 John ii. 16). This, however, is the utmost limit to which the ordinary run of Christian ideas concerning the enmity of the world to the Church of Christ extends: but Scripture carries us considerably beyond this: It speaks of a kingdom of Satan (Matt. xii. 26; Luke xi. 18). And inasmuch as in these words its distinctive hostility to the kingdom of God is at once intimated, we are at the same time told that this opposition is an organized one. It is, in truth, nothing surprising that this modification of the idea should, as a rule, be left entirely out of sight; for, let us only consider for how long a time the idea of a kingdom of God was sublimated into a pure subjectivity and inward thing, without due regard being ever had to the other side of this idea, which points to the organical constitution belonging to such a domain. As men have felt themselves gradually constrained to advance from the notion of a mere subjective and individual Christianity to the conception of the Church, so we must also recognize and acknowledge the reverse of this necessity. Nay, as regards the opposite kingdom, the necessity of a similar advance is still greater; inasmuch as the whole of that domain possesses the element of externality as an original and essential constituent, whereas in the opposite realm the external element is one of merely secondary importance. It also readily becomes apparent that the completion of the subjective idea of the hostility of the world to the Gospel by assuming for it an organized system, must help that of the Church, and on this account we may well venture to assume that much of the exaggeration which, now that the purely subjective apprehension of the idea of the Church has been got over, may be still seen clinging to that idea, will derive its best corrective from a right conception of the opposite kingdom when once it is established. In fact we only need to resign ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Scriptures to find that completion of the idea which we have alluded to.

As soon as upon the earth, purified by the Flood, that form had been established in which the human race was to accomplish its history unto the end of time—as soon as nations and states were formed, we see from the account given us in holy writ, how sin

immediately usurped this form, and shaped it anew, to suit its own temper and interests. This is the signification of the name of Nimrod, (Revolter) as well as of the other names in the geneological table (see Gen. x. 8—12). While all around, the formation of states was following the tardy but divinely ordained rule of uniting those who were bound together by a common language and descent, this mighty hunter continued, by cunning and by might, to catch men on all sides, and to force them to unite in a double kingdom with four cities. This is the revolt of self-will, which not only gains for itself an existence on earth in defiance of the will of God stamped on human nature, but has also the skill to procure for itself a world-ruling authority and influence. What was there in the whole of ancient history grander and mightier, what richer or nobler, than Nineveh and Babylon? But Nimrod's person and empire were not so much of moment in the history of his own times, as rather a sign for the future. For instance, the true significance of this person and his history comes forth from out of the tomb of a thousand years, when, by means of the mountain race of the Chaldees, the ancient Babylon attained to a height of power new and hitherto unseen on earth (see Isaiah xxiii. 13, xxxix. 1). Then the name of Nimrod lived again (see Micah v. 5), and the new Nimrod did not allow expectation to wait long upon him. It was Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, whose domain was over all peoples nations and tongues upon the earth (see Dan. xiii. 7, 29, ii. 37, 38). And he would have no will among all peoples, nations, and tongues, but his own. And all nations, peoples, and languages, all his dignitaries from all the ends of the world, the highest as well as the lowest submit to, and humour the pleasure of this one tyrant. And three men alone refuse to fall down before the image of Nebuchadnezzar (see Dan. ii.). Here, therefore, we see the original sin of man—that isolation of his own will, and the maintenance of it against the will of God—advancing to a height hitherto unparalleled. But the most remarkable circumstance is, that this sinful will of one man, which is opposed to the will of God, maintained its power and authority over the whole earth. Indeed, it is even through the universality of this empire of his will, that that which otherwise seems uttterly mean and insignificant, becomes singularly important and sig-

nificant. The indomitable resistance of the three Jews, that solitary check and restraint upon the might of the ruler of the world, acquires an importance in the history of the world. Here, for the first time, we have exhibited the conflict between the kingdom of God and the empire of the world in all its vast and universal significance. And when this event has once come to pass, the word of God steps in to furnish to believers the necessary information as to its significance. We learn, for instance, from the mouth of Daniel, the servant of God, that the universal empire of Nebuchadnezzar at Babylon was not a passing moment, but the beginning of an influential development in history, which should go on unto the end of days (see Dan. ii. 28—45, vii. 2—27). This prospect held out by prophecy receives historically an early fulfilment even in the first beginnings of this universal empire. Although Nebuchadnezzar is turned from the arrogance of his self-will to an acknowledgment of the true God (chap. iv.), nevertheless, that character of opposition to God, which constitutes the nature of the kingdoms of this world, still continues; as is distinctly and strikingly shewn in the history of his successor, Belshazzar (see chap. v.). How this is possible, is still further shewn in the history of Darius the Mede, and of the Medo-Persian dynasty in the empire of the world (see chap. vi.). Here, for instance, we see that the laws and traditions of the empire of this world, are far stronger than the will of the ruler, however absolute may be the power with which, in appearance, he is invested; and that its very nature, opposed to the kingdom of God, even though personally the emperor may himself be favourably disposed towards it, contrives to manifest itself by means of these laws and traditions. It is in a somewhat different way that the same fact is evidenced in the later times of the Persian dynasty. For even under it, however favourably disposed on the whole to the people of God, this hostility openly breaks out again under Ahasuerus. But the cause of this lies not in the personal character of the sovereign, but in that of his minister, and more especially in that of the latter's wife (see Esther iii. 5—11, v. 10, 14, vi. 13). From this history, we may perceive that the empire of this world is not based on the will of its individual rulers, but on a foundation extrinsical to them; and thus only can its permanence be accounted for, while it passes on from

people to people, and from age to age (see Dan. ii. 44), and that also the influence of consistency which is stronger than any personal humour of rulers, and which, in every case where the ruling authorities are inclined to follow an opposite tendency, enforces respect to itself by the means either of ordinances or of subordinate officials.

This dark back-ground of the world's empire is exposed by the Revelation of the New Testament. Here the great adversary is declared to be the prince of this world (see John xii. 31, xiv. 30, xvi. 11), who has at his disposal the kingdoms of the earth (see Matt. iv. 8; Luke iv. 6, 7). The Prince of this world is, it is true, judged and cast out of Heaven (see Luke x. 18; John xii. 31); but this event is no more an immediate revolution in the circumstances of the world, than the reconciliation of the soul of a man is also the redemption of his body. Consequently, with this victory over the prince of this world, so far is it from this world's kingdom being brought to an end, that, on the contrary, the head of the fourth dynasty of his universal empire, which from the beginning is depicted as the most terrible, comes into its political existence nearly about the same time as the King of the Heavenly kingdom. Now, that in which the Roman dynasty at once and most obviously manifests itself as a secular power, is the circumstance, that it was its officer who condemned and put to death the sacred Head of the people of God, when He had been delivered into his hands. But the representatives of that secular power, on the occasion of the death of Jesus, appear as unconscious mechanical instruments of a foreign evil will. The true conscious presence of the Roman imperial power at the beginnings of the Gospel was, as we have seen, the kingdom of the Edomitish family of Herod in Judea. And this Herodian dynasty, in the proceedings of its third representative, carried its hostility to its height; and consummated it in the bloody persecution of the first martyrs to Christ.

Now, it is naturally the object of Scripture to bring home to men's consciences, the truth that this persecution was not merely individual, but was founded in the essence of the secular empire of the world. Whoever ponders on the course of the sacred history, will infer so much even from the very names and circumstances of those who, on the occasion of this persecution, stand forward as the

most active and prominent personages. However, since the fourth empire had a different form from the earlier ones (Dan. vii. 7, 23), and here came before us in a very strange shape, the necessity arose of pointing out, in a few distinct touches, the character of the mundane empire in this bloody persecution of Jesus' Apostles. And we may understand the object of the otherwise enigmatical conclusion of the section now under consideration.

In the first place, we are told that on the morrow the soldiers who were thrown into great alarm by the disappearance of Peter during the night, were called before Herod to answer for their neglect, and that though blameless, he commanded them to be put to death (see Schöttgen and Meyer). This disappearance of Peter was well calculated to excite the attention, and to rouse the conscience of Herod. When Nebuchadnezzar observed that the three Israelites were unscathed by the fiery furnace, and when Darius became aware of Daniel's preservation in the lion's den, both these secular monarchs acknowledged the God of Heaven, and gave Him honour and glory. That in the same way the deliverance of Peter must have been accomplished by a miracle, might have been inferred by Herod from the report of the soldiers. Instead, however, of coming to himself, Herod obstinately perseveres in his self-will, and to appease his resentment, he orders the innocent soldiers to be put to death. In this the representative of the empire of the world manifested himself in a form which was more terrible than all previous forms (see Dan. vii. 7). We see also in these traits, how the principle of this world's kingdom, thus represented by the Edomitish vassal of the Roman emperor, is far stronger than his personal inclinations and sentiments. We have already observed that this Herod had shewn far less of a bloody temper than any of his predecessors; that, on the contrary, he was of a mild and gentle disposition. By the divine deliverance of Peter, however, he felt his dignity, as a ruler of the universe, most sensibly touched and wounded. He at once felt that his fixed determination to sacrifice Peter to the fanaticism of the Jewish people, was set at nought at the very moment when it was drawing near to its accomplishment. Since, then, at such a moment he saw his imperial dignity and authority thwarted and humbled, he felt it necessary to exercise it in another direction;

for that the soldiers were led off to suffer a bloody death, purely because Herod so willed and ordered it, is precisely the very token and signature of the world's empire (see Dan. v. 19).

Further, it is advanced as a characteristic token, that after this event, Herod removed from Jerusalem to Cesarea, and there held his court (see ver. 19). Cesarea was a considerable city in the land of the Jews. Josephus even speaks of it as *πόλιν Ἰουδαίας μεγίστην.* de B. I. 3, 9, 1). It had been built by Herod the Great, who so named it in honour of Cesar Augustus (see v. Raumer, Palästina S. 136). In it Herod had erected a temple in honour of Augustus; was occupied ten years in constructing the harbour and amphitheatre, and inaugurated the city with gladiatorial games (see ibid.). Although in Cesarea there resided many thousands of Jews (see Joseph. Vita c. 11), still the greater portion of the inhabitants of this city were heathens (see Joseph. B. T. iii. 9. 1); it was the residence of the Roman procurator, as we shall presently have occasion to see (see Acts xxiii. 23, 24; xxvii. 25; cf. x. i.), and in the view of the Romans the capital of Judea (caput Judææ. see Tacit. hist ii. 79). It is, therefore, nothing strange if this city was looked upon as half heathen, partly unclean (see Othon. Lex. Rabbin. p. 95). Inasmuch, then, as Herod removed from Jerusalem to Cesarea, and there abode, it is plain that, though he bore the sign of circumcision, and, from the throne of David, ruled the people of Israel, he must, nevertheless, be regarded as a ruler of the world's imperial system.

And there is a perfect correspondence between the Roman and heathen character of Cesarea, where Herod held his court, and his actions and policy. We are first informed that Herod had been highly displeased with the people of Tyre and Sidon, and was entertaining warlike designs against them (see ver. 20). As we neither know from other quarters, nor are told in the present place, what it was that gave rise to these hostile sentiments of the king's towards the Phenician cities, the cause was, in all probability, of a trifling nature. The fact that Luke passes over in total silence the source of this hostility, serves to remind us that, in the midst of this history we find ourselves in the domain of the empire of the world, where favour and disgrace, life and death, both of individuals and of whole nations, hang upon the absolute

will of an individual, which neither deigns to give an account nor holds itself responsible to any one for its determinations (cf. 2 Kings xviii. 27, 35; Dan. iii. 15). And exactly corresponding to the rise of these hostile feelings of Herod towards the Phenicians is the aspect which the whole of his subsequent course assumes. Ambassadors arrive in Cesarea from the menaced cities in order to sue for peace (ver. 20). What was the ground of their coming? Might it be that these cities were conscious of being in the wrong, and were anxious to remove the obstacles to peace? No: the cause of the embassy was no other than fear. The cities of Phœnicia feel that they are utterly dependent on the residence of the king, because they derived no small profit from their commerce with Palestine, of which the harbour of Cesarea formed the gate (see Winer Real Wörterbuch i. 459). Now, because the cities of Phœnicia are anxious for their gains and means of support, they sink, without a struggle and without resistance, into abject dependence on the whims and caprices of Herod. For it is exactly this that constitutes the might of this world-ruling sovereign, to be able to lord it over and to dispose at will of the whole range of visible things (see Dan. ii. 38; iii. 7—9, 19). In whatever measure, therefore, individuals or nations are dependent or independent of these visible things, in the same are they subject or not to the arbitrary will of the world's rulers. It was consequently, because the three Israelites in Babylon were conscious that their best and highest interests lay not among the things of earth but in Heaven, that they were exalted high above the will and the power of the ruler of the kingdoms of this world. And wherever a merely spiritual good possesses a power and influence over the souls of men, there also is a might able to withstand the same arbitrary will. It was because the Greeks knew and practised virtue that they dared to do battle against the hordes of the emperor of the world and gained the victory (see Herod. vii. 101, 102), and because the Spartans had a law which they feared more than the subjects of these world-rulers did their sovereign, they were enabled to die in defence of their laws, and by their death to give the first check to the hosts of Xerxes (see Herod. vii. 104, 228, 234). But on the other hand, because the Phœnicians know of no higher motive than the security and maintenance of their commercial interests, the

remote possibility even of danger to these interests is sufficient to move the whole people with one accord (*ὁμοθυμαδόν* ver. 20) to submit to any degradation in order to ward off this danger. The possibility of such a ruler of the world depends, not on the existence of a character, in which the pride of man has attained its greatest possible height, but just as much on such a constitution of the affairs of the world, as degrading the people from all spiritual excellence, tempts them to surrender themselves to the enjoyment of those temporal blessings which are at the disposal of the great potentates of the world. Thus the existence of the Babylonian monarchy is accounted for by the readiness of all nations, peoples, and tongues to fall down before the image of Nebuchadnezzar, as much as by the command of that tyrant to all the officers of his kingdom to do so. And in like measure does it belong to the characteristic features of the Herodian monarchy, that the Phenician cities against which the sovereign will of Herod had been moved to anger, should supplicate him with one accord for peace at the first whisper of the threatened danger.

But Luke also found it requisite to record the mode and manner in which this supplication was made, even because it throws out a trait of their general character prominently enough. The Phoenician embassy, for instance, betake themselves not to Herod, but to Blastus. He was not indeed the minister of the king, but he is the king's chamberlain. They attempt to win over to their cause this same chamberlain, and by his means they do indeed succeed in obtaining their object. We here get a glimpse into the mystery of that absolute will which rules the world. This absolute will, when reduced to its real purity, is a sheer deception; and, indeed, in the history of Nebuchadnezzar, its delusiveness is brought into the full light of day; inasmuch as he, at whose will the whole world must prostrate itself on its face to the earth, finally appeared like an irrational brute, devoid of all independence, and was given as a prey to the elements and to the will of man (see Dan. iv. 29, 30). Thus, too, Haman, the all-powerful Vizier, in the empire of Ahasuerus, was subject to the will and humour of his wife Zeresh (see Esther v. 10—14, vi. 13). In a like manner the president of Herod's sleeping chambers is here represented as holding the keys of the heart of the king; and that the popular opinion was not incorrect, was shewn by

the issue. This result, which the efforts of the Phoenician embassy secured by means of the chamberlain Blastus, is then told us in what follows. For the reference of the words πρὸς αὐτοὺς to the embassy, appears to me, after the remark of Winer, to be beyond question. If, then, the people burst forth into admiring plaudits at the address of Herod to the Phoenician ambassadors, we may infer from this that the king had accepted their proposals for peace. Moreover, on this occasion also, the most prominent characteristic of this world's empire is developed. "Upon a set day," we are told, "Herod arrayed himself in royal apparel, and sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto the people" (ver. 21). It was not within the scope of Luke's purpose to give a record of this speech; with him the principal point is the effect of this regal parade, and of the oration which accompanied it. The people of Cesarea, for instance, gave a shout, saying, "it is the voice of a god, and not of a man" (ver. 22). Now, since this saying is adduced as the sentiments of the people, we must suppose that among the shouters there were not only the heathen of Cesarea, but also the Jews who still dwelt there. With these words of the people the utmost limit is reached. They assert both a negative and a positive fact therein. On the one hand they acknowledge in his appearance all that they regard as highest and best; and, on the other, they have no desire to know of any other worship than that which should be directed to his person. By such an avowal, they declared at once that as a people they had renounced all conscience and all claims to personal dignity as men; and at the sametime afforded an occasion to their ruler to trample them under foot as a vile people, who had surrendered themselves to the appearance of a man, as it would to the presence of a god. From whence was Herod to derive the power to resist and to reject this offering of divine honour to himself? And in fact, though conscious of his own human frailty, he had not allowed this incense of adoration to go up to Him to whom alone it is due, but had with much satisfaction accepted it himself. At this moment the pride of the empire of the world rose at once to its zenith. The king, glittering in the splendour of his majesty, and seated on the throne of his power, appears to the surrounding crowd as the lord of life and death, the source of happiness or misery to individuals and

nations, and prostrate at his feet lie the people who, of their own accord, offer him the honours of a god. It is well known, and the fact has long ago been noticed by Eusebius (see H. E. 2, 10), that Josephus (see Ant. 19, 8, 2) has at length detailed this scene, which St Luke is here reporting. The account of Josephus contributes nothing essentially new to the statements of the latter; it seems, however, to give us a more perfect conception of the whole proceeding. Josephus, for instance, tells, that in honour of the Roman emperor, Herod had ordered games and other festivities to be celebrated in Cesarea. On the second day of the games, he had gone at the early dawn into the theatre. Here we are told the beams of the rising sun falling upon his robe, which was composed entirely of silver, occasioned it to glisten with surprising splendour. On this flatterers from all sides shouted out, and addressing him as God, said, "Be gracious unto us: for if hitherto we have only feared thee as a man, we now from this time forward acknowledge thee as exalted far above humanity." After such an address, even Josephus regarded it as a crime in Herod that he calmly listened to their flattery.

But this triumph of the world's regal vanity was not to endure for more than a moment. As soon as it was apparent that Herod drank in the intoxicating draught of this godless and unconscientious flattery of the people, the angel of the Lord smote him (see ver. 23). Josephus tells us that, after listening to this flattery, Herod looked around him, and saw on a sill an owl which he immediately recognized as a bird of ill omen. On this he at once felt heavy at heart. According to this it would seem that even externally there had been a sign of some extraordinary event. If some people think that the expression of St Luke: The angel of the Lord smote him, refers only to his robes (see Meyer, Olshausen, &c. ad loc.) this is surely an error. It is even essential to know that precisely at the very moment that the coherence of nature begins to serve as the substratum to utter godlessness it is broken by a power of higher order. The miraculous operation of the angel is the necessary correlative to that state of the natural order which allows its apotheosis to be celebrated.

To conclude: from all that has been previously observed, it is not for one moment to be doubted, that by this sudden stroke,

which transmuted the god Herod into a mortal man, it is intended we should be reminded of the fate of Nebuchadnezzar (see Dan. iv. 26—40). Precisely at the moment when, in his royal city, king Nebuchadnezzar, expressed himself in such unmeasured terms concerning his empire as to ascribe all to his own might and wisdom, and left nothing to the honour and glory of God, the command came from Heaven to the earth : " Hew down the tree " (Dan. iv. 11). From all these special details, we must draw the conclusion that it is intended that we should regard Herod in the light of one of this world's potentates, although his whole outward appearance points to the kingdom of God rather than to the kingdom of this world. We are, however, reminded thereby of a significant hint which the word of prophecy has given us concerning the future shape which the empire of the word was to take. For instance, in the fourth empire of which the emblem is so complicately shaped, a horn is shown to which great importance is attached (see Dan. vii. 8). To this horn are assigned eyes—as the eyes of a man, and a speaking mouth, therefore a mouth also resembling that of a man. These points of resemblance to man in a symbol which is throughout brutish (see ver. 7), and which even by this brute-like character is designed to represent the internal peculiarities of this empire of the world, are so much the more important as the empire which is opposed to it is described as the empire of a man (see Dan. vii. 13, 18, 21). Accordingly, this horn with the eyes and the mouth of a man intimates that this fourth empire will assume such a form, as that, without losing its peculiar character, it will work itself under the guise of a kingdom of God. And we recognize the first realization of this prophetical vision in the Herodian dynasty, which reached its height in the person of the third Herod. In it we witness the first manifestation of the Jewish element blended with the Roman, in such wise that the former only serves to allow the essence of worldly severity and wickedness to develop itself the more irresistibly and steadily under the semblance of goodness and piety. In the very midst of Israel we here behold the pure essence of the world as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life ; for to what else but the lust of the flesh can we ascribe the decisive influence of Blastus the chamberlain ; and the lust of the eye finds its food

and nourishment in the silver sheen of the royal robes, while, lastly, the pride of life stands out in every trait as the culminating point of all. But these worldly elements are not here exhibited in an individual and isolated case; they are characteristic of a kingdom whose root descends into a long antecedent history of more than a thousand years, and which has now acquired a new impulse striving to propagate its power unto the future times of the world. And now, from these considerations, the narrative of the persecution of the Apostles by Herod acquires by means of what previously seemed its inappropriate appendix, an entirely new weight and significance. The history of the bloody persecution now stands forth as the foreshadowing of future times of difficulty and sorrow to the Church. We see the impulse to such persecution no longer arising from the personal character of individuals, but founded and based on that of a kingdom which has taken a new beginning and has assumed a form peculiarly seductive, of which we also know from other quarters that it will endure as long as time shall last. Our very narrative, however, when once we begin to regard it from the point of view which we have just discovered, spontaneously carries us out of and beyond itself, and points to the future. The power of the Herodian dynasty is not, that is, independent; it is a vassal of Rome. If, therefore, even this Herodian kingdom thus rages, what will the Roman itself do, when once it begins to deck itself out in the guise of a kingdom of God, and when the horn of the beast shall lift itself up to see with the eyes of a man and to speak with the mouth of a man? Moreover, we see it implied in the very end of this Idumean potentate that he is not to be regarded in any other light than as a forerunner and type of the last dynasty of the princes of the world. For if he perishes not beneath the stroke of the angel, but is given over to be eaten by the worms, who, according to Josephus's statement, were five days preying upon him, this is evidently because he was not that absolute enemy of God who was to perish by the breath of His mouth and by the brightness of the coming of the Lord (see Isai. xi. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 8; Rev. xix. 15—16), but was intended to be looked upon as the preliminary representative of this enmity of the world.

With this threatening prospect which the narrative now dis-

closes to the Church, there is at the same time annexed a warning to Christians to be earnestly on their guard against all those delusions to which the Jewish people had fallen a prey. Since, namely, the facts here related exhibit the kingdom of the world in a form and shape essentially foreign to it, it is quite possible that the worldly element of this kingdom may be present there also, where, on account of its Israelitish form, it might be supposed that there would be nothing to be seen that belonged not to the kingdom of God. But the grave and earnest lesson which this history enforces on the Church for all times, is the inference we draw from the death of the Apostle James in silence and without a word: viz., that the Lord surrenders the life of His best and most faithful servants, when necessary for the filling up of the measure of wickedness. Nevertheless this narrative does not fail to supply us also with the needful refreshment and consolation. James, it is true, was given up a prey to his enemies, but Peter was as certainly rescued from out the hands of the all-powerful Herod. That same community, which is destined to feel and to experience that the Lord does abandon them to the powers of this world, are also to experience and to feel that the powers of this world, with all its malice and fraud, are nought, and can of themselves do nothing, so that in any case, whether they are called upon to suffer death, or deliverance is mercifully vouchsafed to them, they are to praise and glorify the Lord as supreme. This, also, the Church may know, that in its dire and utmost need the Lord will hearken to their earnest supplication and incline His will to the desires and wishes of his saints. And lastly, the close of the history is designed to make it manifest that as soon as malice and wickedness shall have filled up their measure on earth, punishment will immediately follow, in order that the all-sufficiency and independence of unrighteousness and wickedness may appear to be simply the consequence of God's long-suffering, whose pleasure it is to permit the law of human freedom to be fully carried out.

It is, however, at the conclusion of the present paragraph that the Church attains to the firmest ground of hope for all future times; for the closing words are: "the Word of God grew and multiplied." For the entire rooting out of the testimony of Jesus was the object which the hatred of the Jews and the perse-

cution of Herod had in view. But although free play and room was granted to their hatred and persecution, and one after another of the ministers of this testimony had fallen a victim to their malice, still both in the deliverance and in the preservation of His servants, it is the will of the one Lord that reigns over all. And at the end this truth is shown forth in the circumstance that that which is far above all personal considerations, and for which these persons cheerfully resign their lives, as recognizing the fact, that it alone must firmly assure the preservation and protection of their true life, is not only not eradicated but has attained to a greater increase and a wider diffusion. In all this there is an especial solace and comfort for the last times amidst all their sorrows and sufferings. For inasmuch as the persecution of Herod is set forth as an emblem of the full measure of the malice of the rulers of this world against the Church of Christ, so from the issue before us we ought to derive the confidence that even though all the devices of cunning and malice, all the floods of violence and all the wiles of seduction should unite together in one band to erase from the earth the testimony to Jesus, and although all hope should vanish from before the eyes of men, still this most terrible career of the kingdom of darkness will eventually terminate in the manifest victory and triumph of the Word of God.

THIRD BOOK.

FIRST PART.

THE CHURCH AMONG THE GENTILES.

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THE CHURCH AMONG THE GENTILES.

§ 21. ORIGIN OF THE MISSION IN THE CHURCH OF ANTIOCH.

(Chap. xii. 25—xiii. 3).

The course of that development which is set forth in the second narrative of St Luke has again brought us to a great epoch. The first decided change in the direction of the ancient Church took place at a time when the hatred of the Jews proceeded to shed the blood of Stephen. From this moment the grand results which had attended the preaching of the Gospel in Jerusalem entirely ceased as far as that locality was concerned. That course, however, which it was prescribed that the Gospel should run, even unto the ends of the earth, was so far from being impeded by this check, that, on the contrary, it was now that it first started on its fulfilment. The Church now entered on its passage from the Jews to the Gentiles. And now, for the second time, the old hostility does its worst in Jerusalem. The very spirit of the kingdoms of this world has fixed its seat firmly in the holy city of God, and its temporal ruler has stained his hands with the blood of an Apostle. Assurance, however, was afforded us, even at the close of the preceding section, that the preaching of the Gospel should make its way even against this

obstacle of malice. But since in the first change in the course of the Church's development we met with a new instrumentality, we naturally look for such in the present case also. The Gospel then opened a road for itself out of Jerusalem; but not, as it previously had been, under the direction of the Apostles, but independently of them. And just so in the present instance: Upon the bloody persecution of the Apostles in Jerusalem a change forthwith occurs, and the Church advancing far beyond the mere passage from the Jews to the Gentiles, takes its place in great amplitude among the heathen. But as the times of the transition were not only different in degree, but also in character from the times of the operation of the Gospel in Jerusalem, just so do we find it to be the case after the second turning-point. We have already seen that the persecution of Herod had at last brought on the moment when the Apostles must regard it as their duty to remain no longer in Jerusalem (see xii. 17). In truth the objection of Baur is not altogether without foundation, nor can it be readily met by the notions currently entertained of the Apostles. He argues for instance: "Had the Apostles been in perfect harmony with Paul, in that case they also would have looked upon it as their duty to labour for the conversion of the Gentiles; for otherwise they would not have fulfilled their mission to the extent at least to which, however they were conscious that their duty bound them" (see der Apostel Paulus. S. 127). But now, will the Apostles accordingly, break up from Jerusalem, and, following their original vocation, which directed them to go to all nations (see Matt. xxviii. 19), and to the uttermost parts of the earth (see Acts i. 8), betake themselves to the heathen? Now, first of all we have not the slightest information of the labours of any one of the Apostles in particular. But inasmuch as the work we are considering evidently has for its design to give us an accurate sketch of the course of the Gospel, it is clear from thence that the first founding of the Church among the Gentiles is not to be looked upon as the work of the Apostles. But perhaps, then, the introduction of the Church into the midst of the Gentiles took its start from one of those points in evangelical life, which possessed an obvious connection with the labours of the twelve—from Samaria, for instance, or from the household of Cornelius

in Cesarea? By no means. On the contrary, we are at once referred to a point in which, both as regards its origin, and also its formation and development, it is absolutely impossible to point out any connection with the Apostles—namely to the Church in Antioch.

Highly significant is it that we are in the first place carried back to the journey of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem and to the object of it (see xi. 30). We have already seen that the alms which the two messengers of the Church of Antioch conveyed to Jerusalem must be regarded as the actual re-union with which the origin of the first Church among the Gentiles was sealed. This collection was the palpable evidence that in the heathen world a new spirit, a spirit of love and brotherhood, had sprung up. For this collection is the bond of fellowship which for the first time the Gentiles held out to Israel across the old gulf of separation. By these alms the Church of the Gentiles in Antioch atoned for the old guilt with which the Gentile world was laden in the sight of Israel. The two opposite poles around which the history of nations revolves—the city of God and the city of the world, are in unison with each other. For the first time has it become an historical fact that there not only lives and reigns a God in Heaven who is no respector of persons (see Acts x. 34), but that on earth, also, there lives and reigns a Spirit, before which all national distinctions vanish, and under whose influence that is fully realized which, on the day of Pentecost, was only symbolized preliminarily — the unity of sentiment amidst every possible variety of external circumstances. When then we call to mind all these facts, the rise of the community at Antioch comes before us in the light of a most important initiatory movement. And if now we further learn that Barnabas and Saul had carried John Mark with them from Jerusalem to Antioch, it would seem that we ought to see in this fact a proof that the Church in Jerusalem had, by means of the alms sent to them, been convinced of the importance and significance of this the first Church among the Gentiles. For John Mark, the son of that Mary at whose house many of the believers at Jerusalem were wont to assemble (see xii. 12), was assuredly no unimportant member of the community there.

It is upon the community at Antioch that we must now fix our

attention. The character which, as a body, they had by their acts already established, may be judged of from those gifts of charity which they had sent in common to the brethren in Judea. We are now informed that they were also distinguished by a fulness of spiritual powers ; there were in it, it is written, prophets and teachers. Under this name of prophets we are in the times of the Apostles to understand those men who, by an extraordinary measure of the Spirit, were enabled to bring the Word of God home to the hearts and minds of men (see Neander Geschichte d. Pflanzung p. i. 194). And besides them there were others to whom there had been vouchsafed the gift and ability to set forth and expound with a calm power of conviction the subject-matter of the Christian doctrine (see Neander ibid cf. 1 Cor. xii. 28). Since a little earlier we are told that prophets had come to Antioch from Jerusalem (see xi. 28), we must, as regards the present case, infer that subsequently these spiritual gifts and powers had been developed in Antioch also and become operative there. In comparison with the similar manifestations in Jerusalem, Samaria, and Cesarea, a certain secrecy and slowness of development are no doubt perceptible in this instance, for whereas in the former places the gifts and intimations of the Spirit come suddenly, in the latter, the conversion is effected without any extraordinary outward signs. But only the more on that account is the reality of this conversion attested by its active love and by the successive occurrence of such spiritual powers as were calculated to, and necessarily must tend to its edification and expansion. It is very possible, and (judging from all that precedes), probable, also, that while the Churches within the limits of Judea come into existence in the midst of many significant and extraordinary signs, this secrecy and gradualness, which are exhibited to us within the limits of the Gentile world, are indications of the very method by which the immediate future of the whole development of the Church is to proceed.

Now, in the next place, the most eminent of those in the Church at Antioch who were endowed with such gifts of prophecy and teaching are adduced by name (see xiii. 1), and although the majority of the names in themselves are wholly strange to us, and are on this account generally passed over without consideration, still there is a point common to them all ; and it is pro-

bably on account of this common trait that they have been recorded. The fact that the name of Barnabas is first given, makes us certain of what otherwise would be a natural presumption; that, viz., in this enumeration the order of importance within the community is observed. Moreover, it is scarcely because Barnabas had been sent to Antioch by the Church at Jerusalem (see xi. 22), that he holds the first place here; but the true reason undoubtedly is, that that gift of prophecy which abode in him, as his very name indicates (see iv. 36), attained at Antioch to its fullest development and operation (see xi. 23, 24). And if then, we ask, what may have been the cause why this particular spot rendered the spiritual endowments of Barnabas thus fruitful, it was probably a natural adaptation to the circumstances which existed and were at work there. By birth he belonged to the island of Cyprus (see iv. 36). By this Hellenistic origin he possessed a natural connection with the Gentile Christians at Antioch. Moreover, it was chiefly natives of Cyprus, who, by their preaching under the free impulse of the Spirit, had gathered together the Church at Antioch (see xi. 20). And we are the more confirmed in this view, when we find that in the case of the other unknown names that follow, all those further particulars that are given point in the same direction. The next person who is named, is Simeon, with the surname of Niger. Now Niger is a well-known Roman name. But, as judging from his leading designation, Simeon is evidently a Jew, we are justified in supposing that he had formed some profitable connection with Rome, which had induced him to adopt this Roman appellation. The very circumstance, therefore, that the latter also is recorded, was surely intended to suggest the conclusion, that the important position he held in the community at Antioch, was not owing to his Jewish origin, but rather to his connection with Romans. And just so is it with Lucius of Cyrene. The question, whether or not he is, as is generally assumed, the same person as the Lucius mentioned in Rome xvi. 21, is a matter of indifference as regards the present passage. But the fact, that he is further described by his Cyrenaic origin, is in his case likewise intended to draw our attention to the natural tie which connected him with the Gentiles. And the same is the case with the fourth name. Manaen is no doubt a genuine Jewish name, common both in ancient

and modern times (מְנַחֵם, see 2 Kings xv. 17; Wettstein and Wolf in locum). But as foster-fellow of Herod the tetrarch (see Matt. xiv. 1; Luke iii. 19, ix. 7), the Idumean ruler who had put John to death and mocked at Jesus, he is exhibited to us under an aspect which, while it presents a natural hostility to the Gospel, nevertheless, when once overcome, would necessarily be transmuted into a connecting link for the Gentiles. Lastly comes the name of Saul, but of him, as well as of Barnabas, it is taken for granted that he is sufficiently well known. As the position of the name of Barnabas has appeared to us of significance, so naturally must it be in like manner with the place assigned to that of Saul. But intelligible as the former appears, the latter seems to be equally unaccountable. What! Saul to be placed not only after Barnabas, but after names which, except in the passage before us, are otherwise altogether unknown. How is it possible that that very Saul should be so treated, whom the Lord Himself had converted by a miraculous manifestation, and had called to be an Apostle of the Gentiles, and who was distinguished above all others with gifts and powers, with words and works, with virtues and with sufferings—such as none other were ever to be compared with? In fact, this very position of the name of Saul has appeared to Schleiermacher so incredible a thing that he has ventured to call in question its historical correctness (see Einleitung in das N. T. S. 354). However, this is nothing but the consequence of critical impatience, which does not allow itself calmness enough to enter into the actual state of the case. Upon calmer consideration the very circumstance at which Schleiermacher takes offence turns out to be a remarkable proof of the objective accuracy of the history. Long ago did Bengel see in this position of Saul's name a sign of the Apostle's singular retiring modesty. St Paul (see 2 Cor. xii. 6) lays it down as a principle which he observed and kept in view that no one should think of him above what they saw him to be or heard of him. In this fact lies the key of much that is apparently hard to be understood in the life and conduct of the Apostle. St Paul is conscious of holding in one respect a very different position from his fellow Apostles. Whereas their authority was based on the tradition of their familiar intimacy with the Lord which prevailed in the Church, ecclesiastical tradition was so far from

being likely to support his influence and authority, it was even calculated to impede his whole usefulness (see ix. 13; xvi. 26). Should he, then, in order to counteract this impression, appeal to that signal grace which had been manifested to him by the extraordinary revelations of Jesus? But this fact was also a matter purely of his own individual experience, and therefore it was not calculated to afford a focus of attraction for winning the confidence of others. One course, therefore, alone remained for Saul, and that was gradually to bring to light the greatness of the work which, under the veil of a sacred secret, the Lord had laid on him, and to verify to the community the credentials of his Apostolic fulness of power. At his very conversion was this way pointed out to St Paul. He learned at the same time to know Jesus both in His Heavenly existence in glory, and in His earthly existence in the Church. And the very way in which his conversion was finally accomplished by means of the word and work of Ananias—a man of the Church—must have seemed to him a plain intimation that it would be no otherwise with his vocation to the Apostolic office, and that this also should ultimately be effected by the Church. It is therefore a fundamental feature in the conduct of the Apostle that he humbles himself and keeps himself in the background until his gifts and endowments are recognised and called into action by the Church, and so by this means that call which he had received immediately from the Lord should be organically engrafted into the development of the Church. It was in consequence of this holding back that he is still tarrying in his native town of Tarsus when he is sought by Barnabas. For Bengel observes with justice that the terms *ἀναζητῆσαι* and *εὑρών* (xi. 25) are evidently intended to imply the concealment of Saul. In the community of Antioch he found the locality in which the sacred germ of his Apostolical powers should first begin to expand. We see this in the fact that Saul was joined with Barnabas in the commission to carry the alms of this community to Jerusalem. Had Saul, for instance, maintained at Antioch his previous state of retirement and unfruitfulness, the Church would not have shewn him this mark of confidence, and, on the other hand, if the regard for the call to the Apostleship which he had received from the Lord Himself had been the predominant consideration in the choice

of the community, then most assuredly his name would have been placed before and not after that of Barnabas. We see, therefore, most distinctly that the motive which actuated and determined the community at Antioch in selecting Saul for this business was nothing more and nothing less than what they had "seen and heard" of him. If, moreover, in spite of the distinction in question, he is, nevertheless, named last in the passage before us, we cannot but draw from it the conclusion that even at this time he still prefers on all occasions to be looked upon as the least among the teachers of the Church, even though he had received from the community an acknowledgment, that, in any case, he deserved to rank as a teacher; in the same way as at a later period, when his title to the Apostolic office had been long conceded to him, he loved to speak of himself as the last of the Apostles (1 Cor. xv. 9), even though, as far as results were concerned, he might justly claim precedence of all. If, now, in the case of all those whose names precede his, we have found an aspect which we are justified in regarding as the natural source of the prominent position they held in the Gentile community of Antioch, the question next arises, whether we are not also bound to look for a similar explanation in the case of Saul. He was, it is true, called to be the Apostle of the Gentiles, and in this call, he is furnished with something more than a mere power to conciliate the good-will of others. However, his Apostolical character cannot in the present place come into consideration; for, otherwise, Saul must have taken the first place. But in Saul's case, as much as in that of the others, there exists an attractive and connecting element between him and the Gentile community—and that is his Hellenistic character; for he owed his birth to the Cilician town of Tarsus (see ix. 11).

Now, from the very few hints which are given us concerning the prophets and teachers of Antioch, we have arrived at this result; that, viz., the calling and commission of these officers of the community form, as it were, a contrast to the commission and vocation of the Apostles. Whereas, that is, in the case of the original Apostles, an external and corporeal communion with Jesus, during His life in the flesh, was the first and the essential condition of their Apostolical functions, so that particular feature, which, as it has appeared from our inquiries, formed the common

qualification of the prominent position which these prophets and teachers held in the community of Antioch, was a greater or less remoteness from communion with the incarnate Lord on earth. In this enumeration, therefore, of the names of the leading members of the Antiochian community, the same principle makes itself distinctly sensible which we have so often met with in the course of that development which we are following. The principle we mean is this, that whatever belonging to external things was founded and established for the sake of the kingdom of Christ, is thrown into the back-ground, whenever it becomes necessary to do so, in order to allow the essence of the Spirit to advance to freer and fuller action. To Jerusalem were the holy twelve assigned, because all the people had seen and again recognised them as the constant companions of the Lord. They, too, were endowed with the Holy Ghost, and with His signs and wonders, and thereby they were forthwith proved to be the appointed witnesses of Him who was now reigning in the Heavens. So that all the people could not but look upon them with reverence and awe (see ver. 13). And what is the end? Why, one of the very chief among this little band of twelve is by Herod slain with the sword, much to the satisfaction of the whole people (see xii. 2, 3); and another of the same company had already been thrown into prison, and all the people were looking with expectation for his public execution. And the consequence of all this is, that the Apostles now began to loosen the bond which had hitherto held them so closely bound to Jerusalem (see xii. 17).

About the same time came forward the aforesaid teachers and prophets in Antioch, the Gentile city. And this contrast serves to place in still clearer light the fact, that the principle of spirituality and liberty prevails in all this. Now that all preparatory matters within the region of external things, both with regard to Israel and the original Apostles, had been brought to an end in Jerusalem, and accordingly had in their own case shown how vain and idle they were, it must forthwith be shown that the Lord had received power over all flesh (see John xii. 2), and that the Lord himself was the Spirit (see 2 Cor. iii. 17), and that consequently He stood in no need of any preliminary or preparatory institutions, but that He was able to create to Himself holy instruments, even of that which stood farthest off, and which most

opposed itself. As the instruments which had been prepared and fashioned out of Israel will not serve the purpose for which they were designed, of accomplishing the salvation of the world, the Spirit attracts that worldly element among the Gentiles which God had left to itself, and by this power adapts it for the service of diffusing the tidings of salvation among all peoples and in all lands. And now we are able to comprehend why in all the prophets and teachers in Antioch, we find such prominence given to that Gentile element of their personal character which most estranged them from Israel.

Of these five prophets and teachers in the Church of Antioch, which are placed in contrast to the twelve apostles in Jerusalem, it is said that they were "ministering unto the Lord and fasting" (ver. 2). The word λειτουργεῖν, it is well known, in its original application, applied to the public offices of the state in Athens (see Wachsmuth, Hellen. Alterthümer ii. 1, 131—138). Subsequently we meet with it in the Alexandrian dialect, used chiefly of the functions of the priestly office (see Schleusner Nov. Thesaurus. s. v.). It is not without significance that this term occurs in the present passage, although the use of it is not very frequent in the language of the New Testament. For we must in fact draw therefrom the inference, that these prophets and teachers, although their official qualifications were not founded on any connection with Israel and its holy institutions, and although they lived in the midst of the profane city of Antioch, and though the circle to which they belonged consisted of Gentiles, who, however, were believers in Jesus—that, in spite of all this, these prophets and teachers actually performed those priestly functions and duties, which, in the times of the Old Testament, pointed always to something out of and beyond themselves, and were waiting for their own realization. For in the Old Testament we meet with two limitations, to which the priesthood was subject. On the one hand, the priest who was designed to represent the whole people, was forbidden simply by his consecration, to do in every respect, what it was lawful for the people to do (see Levit. viii. 35; xxi. 1—15, x. 6); and, on the other, a want of true holiness prevented him from being perfect, even in his official relation towards God (see Levit. xvi. 6; Heb. ix. 7, 8). Inasmuch, therefore, as in this place the sacred service of the prophets and

teachers in the community at Antioch is described as a λειτουργεῖν, we must infer that the line of demarcation which hitherto had invariably distinguished the Aaronic priesthood from the people, was now removed. In fact, this realization of the Old Testament priesthood was brought out more distinctly here than it ever had been in Jerusalem. For although the Apostles, who were the natural representatives of the community there, owed the recognition and influence of their official position to the operation of the Holy Ghost, which was given to and abode in all alike, and in common; still, in the first instance, this their distinguished position was grounded on the relations which had subsisted between them and their Lord. But it is quite obvious that the community at Antioch was the very first-born of that Holy Spirit which abode in the whole Church. It was by Him that the Christians, who, on the dispersion, were driven into Antioch, were awakened and strengthened unto the preaching of Jesus. Between these evangelists and teachers and the whole community, there intervened no outward mean of any kind; not even that of the Apostolic office, though glorified by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Their official dignity and power rested merely on the immediate experience of Divine gifts and powers which all the members of the community had felt in their own hearts. These leaders and teachers of the Church could have no other feeling with regard to themselves than as the divinely appointed guides of the people. As also the members of the community must daily have had the self-same experience of this influence of personal quality, and of their official position, and accordingly must have been compelled by nothing less than the immediate voice of conscience to acknowledge this official representation. Further, by the addition of the words τῷ κυρίῳ it is expressly intimated that that other aspect also of the priesthood of the Old Testament receives here its realization. The gulf which had yawned between the priests and Jehovah, exists no longer between these prophets and their Lord, and whereas the unholy nature of the former could not be hidden from Jehovah by their sacred garments, the latter have, through Christ, become partakers of a holy nature itself, and their own unholiness cannot any longer avail to separate them from their Lord, with whom they are joined by communion of the Spirit and by faith—with whose sanctified nature they have been united on the basis of faith,

and of the Spirit in Sacramental communion. The fulfilment and realization of the priestly office of the Old Testament in the office of the word of the Gospel is therefore first brought distinctly forward in the community at Antioch; as, indeed, afterwards the whole family of terms which are connected with λειτουργεῖν occur solely in St Paul's doctrine of prayer, in order that we might perceive that the fulfilling and realization of the Old Testament economy rests principally in the Spirit, and therefore must attain first of all among the Gentiles to an historical position and significance. But in order to form a right judgment on this matter, we must expressly guard against a very possible confusion of ideas. In modern times, for instance, it has become very common (and especially through the influence of Neander) to regard and to describe many external ceremonies in the later times of the Church, as borrowed from Judaism. It is indeed quite true that, in the origin of these aberrations in the doctrine and ceremonies of the Church, Israelitish institutions still floated before the minds of men, and that the resemblance to matters in the Old Testament did contribute essentially to the sanctioning of such errors, and down to the present day has helped to strengthen and maintain the delusion. In the series of these aberrations of later times, the respect and importance claimed for the priestly order and office obviously belong, and are far from holding the lowest place. Accordingly, it was easy to arrive at the conclusion that if the word λειτουργεῖν is to be taken in the high sense we have given it in the passage before us, then the seed is already sown there, from which the tree of the Romish hierarchy subsequently sprung up. In fact the truth is generally overlooked, that such a transference of the Israelitish economy to the Christian community is as little conformable to the Old as to the New Testament. Nothing less than a great wrong is done to the Old Testament when, as is so often the case, people will not understand that the object which, in the Old Testament is assigned to the whole of Judaism, is to become Christianity. It is forgotten that not only was the whole of the Old destined to become the New Testament, but that it also will do so; that, consequently, every repetition of what belongs to the former, even though (as in any case it is possible under the guidance of God), it might be capable of receiving a better organisation, is nevertheless directly opposed to the purpose and design

of the earlier revelation. Even if, therefore, the Romish clergy were able to establish a far closer connection than they actually do, or can, between the high priest's office and their own system as the continuance of Aaronic priestly family and the Romish sacrificial service, still the very letter of the law would furnish an everlasting testimony against the wrong done by the Roman system to the Christian community, and against the way in which they dim the lustre of the Divine righteousness. Accordingly, that which was done in later times is essentially different from that which now lies before us. What was here begun in the Spirit is there continued in the flesh; here the Old and the New Testament are conceived of in this Divine reciprocity; there, while an attempt is made arbitrarily to suppress the substance of the New Testament by means of the shadow of the Old, the danger is incurred of losing not only the New, but also the Old.

Now the counterpart of λειτουργεῖν is the term νηστεύειν (ver. 2). While λειτουργεῖν shows that these prophets and apostles, although they were not of Israelitish origin, nevertheless in the discharge of their office and its sacred obligations, whether towards God or towards the community, conformed to the ordinances appointed by God Himself in Israel, the word νηστεύειν makes it clear that in respect also to the world they took up the position which from of old God had prescribed unto His holy people. The first thing that Abraham was enjoined to do, was to separate himself from the world in which he had been born, and to afflict and humble the soul was a duty enjoined on all the people whenever they wished to enjoy undisturbed communion with Jehovah (Levit. xxiii. 27). But from of old this afflicting and humbling of the soul has been generally effected by means of fasting, and therefore, on this ground some codices of the Septuagint translate the Hebrew expression וְעִנִּיתֶם נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם (Levit. xxiii. 27), by νηστεύσατε see Schleusner, s. v. νηστεύω, and in Exod. xxxviii. 8 the Alexandrian version renders the description of the women who ministered at the door of the tabernacle by νηστεύσασαι. The word νηστεύειν therefore rightly and correctly represents the Jewish renunciation of the world. This therefore is asserted of the leaders of the community in Antioch, that although they did not observe the Jewish differences of

meats, and in all matters lived with their community after the manner of the Gentiles (see Gal. ii. 14), they nevertheless did not, by any means, walk in the license of the Heathen; but in the main points of the relation to the world sustained the holy character that belonged unto Israel.

Just as the Church in Antioch perfected itself by its gifts of charity to the brethren in Judea, so, by the holy character of their institutions for the worship of God, and by their renunciation of the world, did its leading members and teachers attain to the height of the realization of the ordinances of the Old Testament. It is at the moment of this perfection of the community and of its leaders that an instruction from the Holy Ghost is imparted unto this body of Christians in a heathen city. Vouchsafed, we say, to the whole body, although not only are the words of the Holy Spirit addressed exclusively to the teachers and prophets of the community, but also afterwards in the execution of the duty enjoined by them, no one besides them is spoken of. For that the business which is here in question is a matter of general interest, is involved in the very nature of the thing. For the matter in hand, as we shall presently see, is nothing less than the sending out of two preachers of the Gospel unto the Gentiles. From all the results, therefore, which we have previously arrived at with regard to the nature of Christian communion in general, as well as from all that we have specially discovered to be the distinctive peculiarity of this community in Antioch, we cannot but form the certain conclusion that in such a matter the whole body must have co-operated with its teachers and leaders. To mention one consideration only: How could that community which had sent forth Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem to convey the common alms to the brethren in Judea, ever have endured to see the same two members of their own body set out to carry the word of life to their fellow-Gentiles without taking part therein both in heart and mouth? And we are confirmed in this view by the passage (xiv. 26), where Antioch, without further detail, is spoken of as the place from which the two Apostolical missionaries had been commended to the grace of God. For not only the general designation of Antioch, but also the emphatic mention of the prayers there made, points most assuredly not to a few members, but to the whole collective body. The same conclusion

follows by analogy from the account of Paul's departure on his second journey. On this occasion he also started from Antioch, and we are told that "He was recommended by the brethren to the grace of God" (xv. 40). Although, therefore, the words: "Separate ye me," were immediately spoken to the five leaders of the community, we have reason, we think, for supposing them to be addressed to the whole of the Church there. It would be something quite unnatural if the three inferior and subordinate personages should have thus sent forth the two who were the most eminent of their body. Moreover, it could never have entered into the minds of these prophets and teachers at Antioch to isolate themselves so completely from the rest of the community, and least of all at a moment when it was as representatives of the body (λειτουργοῦντες) that they were officiating.

When, therefore, it is said, after they had fasted and prayed and laid hands on them they sent them away (ver. 3), we must think of the whole community as the subject of the whole. The part, therefore, taken by the aforesaid prophets and teachers must, in any case, be regarded merely as a leading one, and, indeed, conformable to the light under which we have learned to look upon their position and influence generally—that, viz., it was so far from excluding the co-operation of the whole community that on all occasions it does but put the latter on its true organic course. Whilst, then, the whole Antiochene community perseveres in renouncing the world, and in giving its heart to God, they receive the fulness of power to enable them by the laying on of their hands to convey to the two Apostolical missionaries the seal and realization of the call which had been made to them by the Holy Spirit (see ver. 2 towards the end: cf. also vi. 6; viii. 7). We therefore, for our parts, consider it to be perfectly justifiable if Schleiermacher (Christl. Sitte S. 382) insists (on the authority of the passage before us), that in the case of sending out missionaries, the one indispensable condition is the organisation of the community by which they are sent. But at the same time there is yet another matter to be taken into consideration, if we care to estimate correctly how much was here confided to the Church at Antioch. For no one would be willing to overlook how the facts of the case really stand. Upon His departure from the earth the Lord had commanded His Apostles to go forth

unto the ends of the world (see Matt. xxviii. 9 ; Acts i. 8). Now that which is tacitly assumed as the condition of this command had not been fulfilled ; and consequently the Apostles had retired from Jerusalem without feeling themselves called upon to go unto the Gentiles. If the purely external and legal way in which, with regard to missionary matters it is now so common to deal with this command of the Lord, had really anything to justify it, then the Apostles, long before the date we are speaking of, ought to have proceeded to the isles of the sea, and to all the ends of the earth. But it is not in the way of the letter but in the way of the Spirit, that the words of the Lord are to attain to their fulfilment. That command of the Lord which we are alluding to, as it cannot attain to its fulfilment in the way it was originally intended, is drawn back again unto the ground of the Spirit, and comes forth once more for its accomplishment in a new shape. It is the Holy Ghost who now, by an inward vocation, calls forth its instruments for the conversion of the heathen (see v. 2 towards the end). And the Spirit employs the first Gentile community, that it had gathered and formed by His own power, as the consecrated organ for carrying out this internal call. It is easy to see that in the foundation for missionary work thus laid, a rule is established for all future times, and that in reference to all such occasions in the Church, there is far more reason for referring to this sending forth of Barnabas and Saul by the congregation of Antioch than to that command of Christ to His Apostles :—or rather, we have to think of Christ's injunction to His Apostles under the modification it received from the words and work of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Antioch.

§ 22. THE FIRST FRUIT OF ST PAUL'S APOSTOLATE.

(Chap. xiii. 4—12.)

All the circumstances which in the development of the Church have hitherto been brought before our notice, lead to this result : that in this mission of Paul and Barnabas from the community at Antioch we are to recognize the source which is destined to fill the stream into which all the brooks which carry along the

stream of life, must disembogue. Here is the beginning which our history steadily adheres to, and which, in a straight line, it carries on to the end of that preliminary consummation to which the narrative attains. At the very opening, therefore, of the present section, which is intended to exhibit to us the first link of this living chain, the sending out by the leaders and general members of the community is forthwith, and without further explanation, spoken of as a sending by the Holy Ghost (see ver. 4). We feel therefore constrained to maintain that the Antiochene community acted therein as the pure, unprejudiced organ of the Holy Spirit, and even thereby became capable of commencing a process which was to continue as long as the times of the Gentiles should last.

Now, what the particular work was to which the Holy Ghost had inwardly called these two men, and for which they were thereupon solemnly commissioned by the Church of Antioch, is nowhere further stated. However, from what follows as well as from what precedes, we are led to conclude that it was the task of preaching the Gospel both far and near. It is implied in the very nature of such a commission, and it is distinctly shown in the way it was subsequently carried out (xvi. 6, 7), that it would be conveyed only in general terms, and that all details would be left to the judgment of those who were entrusted with the duty. We must therefore suppose that the call that Barnabas and Saul received was to go afar off and to preach the Gospel, but that the direction in which they should proceed was left to their own judgment. By it they were both so engrossed with the work enjoined upon them, that all the thoughts and purposes of their minds were given up to it. Persons so consecrated would be enabled of themselves to find out the special ways and means by which the appointed end would be best obtained. We have therefore to inquire what motives induced the Apostles to choose the route to Cilicia, and from thence to Cyprus? That the Orontes flowed towards the west, and that the commerce of Antioch pointed in the same direction, could not have been sufficient reasons to determine the heralds of the Gospel. For what communion has grace with nature? And what has the "pearl of great price" in common with the wares of the merchant? However, the only consideration that could have guided and

determined the missionaries, coincided in the present instance with the promptings of nature and commerce. Why was Antioch, the seat of government, selected to be the seat of the first Gentile Church, and after that to be the starting point from which the Gospel again set forth on its further advances? This is a question which must have occurred to the minds of these messengers of the Holy Ghost, and the more so as it was precisely in a similar way that they had been brought from Jerusalem, the chosen city of God. We cannot but suppose that both these divinely called and blessed messengers of salvation to those who were afar off, were attentive observers of things; and as such it could not have escaped them that this founding and establishing of the Gentile Church in Antioch at the same time that the Apostles were forced to quit Jerusalem, was intended to be a signal that the history of salvation was destined to follow the same route over lands and seas as the natural history of mankind had taken; that, as Israel of old, so the Lord must tread upon the high places (see Deut. xxxiii. 29). Antioch, once the seat of the temporal kings of Javan, thus brought into subjection by the Lord, must have been a sign to these messengers unto those that were afar off, that they were to turn neither to the east, nor to the north, nor to the south, but to the west. For it was even in the west that lay the roots of that Gentile life and character which, in Antioch, had thrown itself before the feet of the Lord. In the west, too, was enthroned the high and lofty city wherein was the gravitating centre of the empire of this world, and which made its imperial power and might to be felt even as far off as in the very bosom of Antioch. That direction towards the west which followed the course of the Orontes and the track of commerce, was thereby fully decided for our missionaries. That in accordance with this plan they should have betaken themselves first of all to Seleucia, the nearest harbour on the western sea, is perfectly intelligible. Why, however, having taken ship there, they landed at Cyprus (ver. 4) is not so immediately obvious. The two Apostles are now standing on the shore of that great sea which washes the islands and the coasts, and on which are situated the central interests of the nations and languages of the earth. Shall they then at once set off for the ultimate object of their labours, or shall they only attempt gradually to draw near

to that their highest but remotest aim. To their spiritual eye, piercing into the remote distance, the great island of Cyprus is the first object that presents itself. It was the birth place of Barnabas (iv. 36)—the native country of all those who had especially contributed to the formation of the first Church of the Gentiles in Antioch (see xi. 20). How could they ever pass by this island, which possessed so many ties and so many attractions for them? It appeared impossible. Such considerations induced them to make Cyprus their first landing-place and the first scene of their labours, and in this way the rule of gradual proceeding was established for all future times.

The landing at Salamis on the eastern coast of Cyprus is to these two messengers of salvation the sign for the beginning of their holy work. They tread on Salamis as on the first spot in the great missionary field of the heathen world. And here they do that which afterwards we shall often see them doing; they turn first of all to the Jews. After all that has preceded there cannot be a question that these messengers, sent forth from the Gentile Church, were truly and properly designed for the Gentiles. Wherein, then, consisted the novel and peculiar character of the work to which the Holy Ghost had called them (see xiii. 2), if it did not in any respects differ from what the Apostles and non-Apostles had performed in many places and at many times? But how then comes it that these Apostles of the Gentiles first turn to the Jews? This question has, in these latter days, acquired a special importance from the fact that this circumstance, which, as we have already observed, is of frequent occurrence in the history of the Apostles, has furnished occasion to one of the bitterest and most vehement attacks upon the historical accuracy of the book before us. Since, however, the complaint on which it is founded amounts to this, that such a procedure is perfectly inconsistent with the peculiar temperament of St Paul, such as it becomes known to us from other sources, we shall not enter upon the discussion of this question in the present place, where Barnabas, and not St Paul, is brought before us as the leading and principal person. We shall content ourselves here with observing that Barnabas, even while he said that the time had arrived for the admission of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, might still maintain that in every quarter

the call must go forth first of all to the Jews, in the hope of rescuing from perdition, if not the whole nation, yet at any rate a few of its members. This respect for the prerogative of Israel, even at the moment when their faces were turned away from Jerusalem and directed towards Rome, is the internal compensation for this abandonment of Israel as a nation, and this decided preference of the Gentiles. And to serve as a perpetual memento of the community in Jerusalem which had been set up as a memorial that the call and election of Israel from amongst all nations still held good, there stood beside them John Mark, who had not only accompanied them from Jerusalem to Antioch, but was now also going with them to the Gentiles as their helper. This reference of St Mark to the Church at Jerusalem, and consequently to the Jews, is the reason why here precisely mention (ver. 5) is made of him as accompanying Barnabas and Saul. Besides, no more information is given as to the result of their preaching the Gospel in the synagogues of Salamis than was furnished with regard to the earlier and previous preaching of the divine message to the Jews in Cyprus (xi. 19). The reason in both cases is the same. From this silence, namely, we are to deduce the conclusion that the preaching of the Gospel to the Jews at this date, is to be looked upon rather as a transition-point than as a link in the proper chain of the historical development.

The two messengers hereupon pass through the whole island, but nothing remarkable has been recorded of their journey; and to our mind this is a proof that the object they had in view was to go over as large a space as possible. Although we here see them detained near at home by the natural attraction of kindred and relationship, and proceeding only by a gradual course, they nevertheless kept constantly in view their great and ulterior aim, and therefore, with a view to it, whenever they feel unable to promise themselves any considerable results of their labours, they push forward with all haste. In this way they quickly pass through the whole island from its eastern to its western extremity. And it is precisely at its western end that Paphos lies—the capital of the whole island, and the residence of the Roman proconsul, who was the representative of the Roman emperor of the whole world (cf. Winer ii. 191; Hug

Einleitung i. 24; Wolf. ad h. l.). Paphos, indeed, while it points backwards to Antioch, carries us onwards also to Rome. Accordingly we ought not to be taken with surprise, if precisely at this spot the preaching of the Apostles attains that which hitherto they had not been able to accomplish in the whole island—if, at this place, the results of the first mission to the Gentiles come to light. In truth it is so; and therefore on account of this important passage, we shall have to concentrate all our attention on this fact. If Zeller (see the Theol. Jahrb. 1849. 589) thinks he sees the preaching to the Jews set forth in so strong a light in the above passage, that, compared with it, all the Apostle's labours in Paphos are thrown into the shade—this, as every one will, at the first blush, perceive, is a distorted picture of the true state of the matter, which has been misrepresented merely for the interests of his hypothesis.

"They found" we are told "a Jew, a sorcerer and false prophet, by name Barjesus, who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man" (ver. 6). First of all let us take a closer view of the two persons here brought before us. The Jew Barjesus is described as a sorcerer and false prophet. The tendency towards the arbitrary smoothing away of the antagonism between the Divine and human, between the celestial and the terrestrial, properly belongs to the character of this age of ferment (see Gieseler Kirchen Geschichte i. 36—42. 3 Engl. transl. p. 39; Schmidt Geschichte d. Denk. u. Glaubensfreiheit S. 183—186). Even the Jews gave into this tendency, as is proved by the origin of the Caballa, (see Jost Geschichte d. Israeliten iii 70—77. Zunz die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge d. Juden. S. 163. Aechtheit d. Pastoralbriefe. S. 170—178). And it is as a representative of this Cabbalistic tendency that we are to regard Barjesus. But since he is called a false prophet, we must consequently conceive of his ruling tendency not merely as a purely subjective thinking and wishing; on the contrary, we must think of him as one who was actually under the influence of demoniacal powers. For, in the language of Scripture, a prophet is always an inspired person, whether it be with the inspiration of the Holy Ghost or that of a lying spirit (see 2 Kings xxii. 21—23). It is by such a spirit that Barjesus was actuated, and consequently in the domain, both of knowledge and doing, he may have succeeded in

performing one or two things which went far beyond the ordinary powers of man. Now, as in such a tendency the distinction between Jew and Gentile must in his case have been lost, he had evidently sought to attach himself to the Gentile element in order thereby to produce a greater effect on the Gentiles. Just as the Jewish scholars, Philo and Josephus, accommodate themselves to the Greek and Roman culture and mode of thinking, so the false prophet adapts himself to such heathen elements as belong to the influence over spiritual and celestial powers; and he attempted to recommend this accommodation by a name borrowed from the Arabians, and beyond all doubt of solemn significance عَلِيم (alimun—Elumas a Wise—man. cf. Bochart Hieroz. i. 750). Already had Barjesus succeeded in making him a reputation, and gaining the respect of men. We might perhaps be disposed to conclude that the proconsul was one of the dissolute Romans who, by their devotion to oriental mysteries, sought as much to sanctify as to atone for their impure deeds. But Luke at once removes from our minds such an idea by the epithet *ἀνὴρ σύνετος*. We cannot refer this intelligence merely to the business of life, for in that case what should we gather from such a description in a context like the present? It must therefore relate to divine things. Now, this intelligence must have exhibited itself primarily in the fact of his having recognized the unsatisfactory and inadequate character of the religion of Rome, and in this perception would further be the root of a desire of something better and higher. With a mind thus unsatisfied, and full of longings after truth, the Roman consul fell in with the Jew, who in all probability still adhered to the monotheism of his forefathers, and sought to maintain its glorious superiority to every form of heathen polytheism. And must not the impression which this intercourse necessarily left on such a mind have been the conviction of a surer and more stable position than his own. And indeed we meet with many instances of the kind in this period (see Part i. 238, 239). And then, as the Jew, moreover, endeavoured to render this superiority of his religious position as attractive as possible to the heathen mind by extraordinary achievements of every kind, both in word and work, we can well understand the intimacy

which we find subsisting between the Roman consul and the Jewish sorcerer. For that, in these times of universal decay, even the better and the nobler tendencies had recourse to the domain of magic and sorcery is also testified by other authorities (see Ritter Geschichte d. Philosophie iv. 632, Eng. transl. p. 636 ; Tholuck, in Neander's Denkwurdigkeiten pp. 109, 110).

Now, we are told that Barnabas and Saul first of all found the Jew Barjesus, and that in consequence the proconsul ordered them to be called unto him that he might hear from their mouths the Word of God. According to this statement we must suppose that the Apostles had fallen in with this Jew in Paphos, on the first opportunity that presented itself, and that they had on this occasion informed him of their object, and the message they were charged with. The Jew subsequently reports to the Roman proconsul his meeting with the messengers of the Gospel as a remarkable piece of news. Now, although, as is clear from the subsequent course of the history, Barjesus had assumed a decidedly hostile attitude against the Gospel, still the tidings of the arrival of the two evangelists, though given by a mouth most hostilely disposed, nevertheless excited the interest of the proconsul to such a degree that he could not rest till he had himself seen and heard them. This little incident does but serve to confirm the sketch we have thrown off of the character of Sergius Paulus. That same intelligence which did not allow him to remain satisfied and contented with the religion of ancient Rome, and gave him that preference for the new and the mysterious which, for the satisfaction of his religious cravings, the Jewish sorcerer had engaged to supply—that same shrewdness prevented him from finding contentment within the range of Jewish and Oriental mystery and magic. It caused the proconsul to feel so lively an interest in the Apostles who had recently arrived, and he will not submit to have it repressed or checked even by the authority which his Jewish prophet possessed over his mind.

Accordingly, Barnabas and Saul appear before the Roman proconsul, and, as we are told, that his great desire was to hear the Word of God, it is taken for granted that they gave an account of the Gospel message before him. Without doubt, the

sensitive mind of the Roman governor—for such its tone seems to have been from all that we have previously heard of it—was deeply impressed by the Apostles' preaching. Elymas must have perceived at once that nothing less than his whole influence was at stake, and he therefore set himself to oppose the Apostles by every means in his power, with the definite object of diverting from the faith the mind of the proconsul, who evidently was becoming more and more favourably disposed towards it. This was a turning point of the highest importance; and it is necessary to dwell a few moments upon it. At his own request, the messengers of God have appeared in the presence of the supreme governor of the island; but the person whom, on account of his great knowledge and skill, this magistrate has hitherto honoured with his fullest confidence, sets himself hostilely to oppose the divine ambassadors with all the powers of his mind. This scene spontaneously reminds us of a similar situation in the history of the Old Testament. Thus of old, for instance, Moses and Aaron, the delegates of the Most High, stood before Pharoah, the supreme lord of the land of Egypt, and endeavoured to win his heart to sanction that which had been enjoined upon them by the Lord. But against them there stood up the wise men, the learned, and the magicians of Egypt, who by putting to use all the powers they possessed, were enabled to remove the impression which Moses had made upon Pharoah, and to confirm the king in his hostile feelings and purpose (Ex. vii. 11—13). The conduct of the Egyptian sorcerers, Jannes and Jambres towards Moses, is described by St Paul, in exactly the same words as those with which St Luke here speaks of the position which Elymas took up towards Barnabas and Saul (2 Tim. iii. 8). But this analogy only serves to awaken our attention to the great difference between the two periods. The magicians, who of old showed this resistance to Moses and Aaron, and destroyed the wholesome impression made upon him by the messengers of God, were Egyptians and heathens; but Elymas, who in the present case withstood the Apostles, was a Jew, his real name being Barjesus. And, further, Pharoah, the king of Egypt, surrenders himself to, and allows himself to be taken captive by, the unholy influence of his sorcerers; whereas, Sergius Paulus, on the contrary, the Roman lord of the island of Cyprus, is so

far from allowing himself to be ruled by his sorcerer Elymas, that he rather defies all his powers of resistance, and gives his fullest confidence to the messengers of God. The fact which hitherto has several times forced itself on our notice in its different elements,—viz., the turning away of the Jews from God, and the turning of the Gentiles to Him, is here brought before us in a highly significant manner, and comprised in a single instance.

This total change of the previous relations of the Gentile world to the tidings of salvation which is here brought to light, for the first time, with both its aspects comprised in a single act, takes place before the very eyes of Saul of Tarsus. Up to this moment he had steadily kept himself in the background, and had shunned all pre-eminence. Now, at length, he finds himself on the very path which, at the very first moment of his conversion, had been pointed out to him by the Lord himself. But it was not because of his call to be an Apostle that he had been sent out on this mission by the Church at Antioch; otherwise his name would not have been placed after that of Barnabas, but he would have had precedence of him. Consequently if he had been deemed worthy to be sent on this mission, it was because he had approved himself to the community as well deserving of such confidence. On this path of the demonstration of the Spirit and power, Saul, with Barnabas for his leader and guide, had entered upon his course as a herald of salvation to the heathen, and in the earliest stage of this career, he is brought to a scene which, as we have seen, first brought before the eyes of men the great change which had taken place in the development of the history of salvation. What an impression must this scene have made upon the mind of Saul! His own call implied as its condition the hatred and turning away of Israel from the tidings of salvation (for it was to labour among the twelve tribes that the twelve Apostles had been called, and there was no need of a thirteenth), no less than it implied a disposition on the part of the heathen to receive the same word. For after Israel had shut his heart against the kingdom of God, unless the Gentiles should be ready to adopt it, then would it have no place upon earth—a consequence, however, which is opposed, not only to all the hopes of the Old, but also to all the promises of the New Testa-

ment. When, therefore, at one and the same moment, the Roman centurion manifested his trustful adherence, and on the other, the Jew exhibited as selfish resistance to it, Saul could not fail to see in all this that very position and temper of the nations of the earth, which his conversion and call had from the beginning been destined to meet. Accordingly the experience of this moment naturally struck out the hitherto smouldering and secret sparks of the flame which the Divine call had kindled within him, and set it to work. On this occasion we first hear the voice of Saul speaking publicly.

The historian describes Saul at this moment inwardly as filled with the Holy Ghost, but outwardly as looking with a fixed gaze on the false prophet Elymas. This fulness of the Holy Ghost which had been imparted to Saul at his baptism (see ix. 17) had hitherto been hidden. It now exhibits itself for the first time, and, indeed, by means of his look thus fixed on the Jewish seducer.[1] It was in this state both internally and externally that St Paul delivers his first public address. The speech following his look was directed to, and in condemnation of, Elymas the Jew. He addresses him as the "child of the devil." By this application it is probable that, as Bengel thinks, he wished to express the very opposite of his true name Barjesus—son of Joshua or Jesu—in order that by such a designation he might at once expose the inconsistency between the appearance and the reality in the character of the man. Now, with regard to the meaning of this address, we must go to its first rise and origin to explain and understand it. To the serpent that beguiled man a seed is ascribed in the word of God, which should carry on the conflict with the seed of the woman until its final defeat and destruction (see Gen. iii. 15). The man had received into himself the word of the serpent into which it had breathed that seductive cunning which is its essence, and had cast away from him the word of God. Now in Gen. iii. 15, the propagation of this principle of seduction is asserted, and its unceasing conflict with the human race is implied. But when, in the place of the original difference between man and the serpent,

1 That the absence of a conjunction between πλησθείς and ἀτενίσας which is found in many of the oldest MSS. requires the connection of ideas which we have indicated above, has been shewn by Meyer ad. loc.

that imbibing of the venomous essence of the serpent had occurred, we can no longer think of this propagation as being carried on extrinsically to the sphere of human nature, but we must suppose it to go on immediately within the same. The Old Testament does, it is true, spread a veil over this secret, doleful abyss, even because throughout it directs itself pre-eminently to that which is external. But as soon as the days of the New Testament began to dawn, this veil was forthwith removed. For, since the mysterious and external principle of all salvation was about to be revealed, the profound and everlasting source of all, might, nay ought, to be brought to light. John the Baptist termed the Sadducees and Pharisees a generation of vipers (see Matt. iii. 7), and not only does the Lord himself repeat the phrase (see Matt. xii. 34, xxiii. 33), but He also strips from off them the cloak of the Old Testament, and exposes them in all the hideous nakedness of their real nature (see John viii. 44). Moreover, these passages of the New Testament, shew that such laying bare of a hideous truth invariably takes place when evil has reached its height, and by its culmination forces the spiritual observer to look into the ultimate source and first beginnings of such phenomena. It is in this light, then, that we ought to consider the origin of the designation in the present passage, and which carries us back to John viii. 44 above all others. The first beginning of the Jew's malevolence had the more aroused the Apostle, the more distinctly the Spirit, of whom he was full, pointed out to him in Elymas the representative of all those who opposed themselves, and impeded or disturbed the kingdom of God. Thus the whole nation of the Jews had betrayed their Lord and their king to the Gentiles (see Acts vii. 52), nevertheless it is Judas pre-eminently who is called the traitor, because, when he was a member of His most immediate and intimate circle, he had given up his Lord and master to His bitter enemies, and thereby, in a way that no else ever had, had caused the whole body of the people to individualize itself, as it were, in his person. It is precisely on this account that it is said of Judas that Satan had entered into him (see John xiii. 27), and for a similar reason Barjesus is addressed by St Paul as the "child of the devil." By three predicates does he describe him in his inmost character, and thereupon paints, by a single sentence,

the whole of his outward manifestation and relations. His mental character is depicted, both in its positive and its negative aspect. On the one hand it is "subtlety" and "mischief" (ῥαδιουργία); on the other enmity to all "righteousness." Subtlety and cunning are the chief features in the character of this Jew, who, against knowledge and conscience, makes use of impure means and arts, in order to disguise his own selfish objects under the mask of holiness and godliness, and who especially on the present occasion, is seeking to employ the influence he had gained by his hypocrisy for the purpose of counteracting the impression which the Word of God had made on the Roman consul. And exactly such was the leading characteristic of the first deceiver. He did not come forward with a pure naked lie; but he clothed the lie "ye shall not die" in the truth "ye shall know good and evil," and with such subtlety and falsehood did he work counter to the word of God which had been given to the first man. He, however, who has once falsified his conscience by fraud and cunning, loses all that gravity which alone can give to doing and working its stedfastness and impressiveness; his acts and deeds become frivolous and void of solidity, determined only by vain worthless humour and caprice. To set a man entirely loose from the will of God—the eternal foundation of all things—and to plunge him into the void nullity of his own pleasure—that has been the devil's work from the very beginning. Thus in the woman and in the man in Paradise, we find as the immediate consequence of their giving credence to a lie the light-minded transgression of the Divine command. But, now, cunning and fraud, deadness of conscience, and frivolity, are very widely diffused among men, and these features are therefore but slightly individual and characteristic. St Paul, however, does not omit to set forth distinctly, that in the present case a superabundance of these devilish qualities had manifested itself. By two extremely strong expressions, Saul makes this exceptional height of wickedness noticeable, and he addresses this Jew as full of "subtilty and wickedness," intimating thereby the very contrary of his own internal state. As he himself is full of the Holy Ghost, and nothing within or about him is withdrawn from the influence of the Spirit, so Elymas is filled throughout with the impure devices of the "liar from the be-

ginning." A further heightening of the picture, is the ascription of all subtilty, and "all" wickedness to the Jew. And especially in this that it is not so much any particular kind or tendency of subtilty and wickedness that is here developed, but subtilty and wickedness of every kind and tendency, whenever and wherever circumstances may furnish the occasion and the motive, we have a proof that the very principle of wickedness and subtilty had here individualized itself, and that the designation of "child of the devil" was perfectly justifiable. Since alongside of the kingdom of good a kingdom of evil also exists, it is both of nature and of necessity that such a disposition and tone of mind should also have its antagonistic side. And this side also attained to its manifestation in the resistance which Elymas showed to the preaching of the Apostles. The kingdom of God is here indicated by "righteousness"—the conduct which is agreeable to the original law of God. Now, while righteousness at once compels a recognition of itself from moral beings who have not fallen irrecoverably from their true nature and destination, and while indeed it has a charm and an attraction for them, the character of Elymas is marked by a hatred of justice, and a vehement rejection of all its claims. And exactly similar to this is the history of sin as it meets us in the primary records of the human race. In the first man there still survived a certain disposition to receive and to adopt the word of God, even after his adoption of a lie and his transgression and fall; but in Cain sin has grown into a hatred of righteousness—of which Abel is the representative—(see Matt. xxiii. 35; Hebr. xi. 4); and it is because Cain hated the righteousness of Abel, that St John says, "he was of that wicked one" (1 John iii. 12); just as Paul calls the enemy of all righteousness the "son of the devil." And, accordingly, while by means of the term ἐχθρέ, his enmity to righteousness is depicted in its deepest profundity, the word πάσης again leads to the idea of such an extent of animosity as is wholly inconceivable, unless as resting on the basis of a principle.

Having by these predicates described the inward disposition of Elymas the Jew, the historian proceeds to pass judgment on his conduct and actions. And the sentence of condemnation is couched in the words that "he ceaseth not to pervert the right ways of the Lord." The right ways of the Lord, are His revela-

tions and mighty works in which He had made known to the people of Israel His justice and His truth (Deut. xxxii. 4). Israel had been called upon to see in these ways of the Lord his salvation, and to praise them before the heathen, in order that by the knowledge thereof the Gentiles also might be induced to come in and be saved. It was in the discharge of this office and vocation of Israel that Barnabas and Saul were at this moment engaged. To the Proconsul who had desired to see them, they had pointed out the way which God had followed with His people, Israel, in order to bring about the scheme of salvation unto eternity, which for Jew as well as for Gentile, should be both amply sufficient, and also the only one. Now, such is the unfathomable depth of his falsehood and wickedness, that this Jew, Barjesus, instead of aiding the Apostles in their holy work, as might have been expected from his origin, and also from his name, proceeds to dispute their exposition of the ways of the Lord, and to make His straight ways crooked, and His smooth paths rough, in order to prevent the Proconsul from arriving at a knowledge of salvation.

As Saul discerned in the character and conduct of the Jew nothing less than the full maturity of wickedness and malice, he felt himself called upon by the Spirit which filled him, to exercise vengeance on this mass of sin. Accordingly, he declares: "And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." The words of the Apostle were the words of God. For "immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness, and going about he sought for some one to lead him by the hand" (ver. 11). We now see the reserve and privacy which the Apostle had long maintained suddenly broken by these extraordinary and singular circumstances; and immediately his silence gives way, not only to the word of an Apostle, but also to the deed of an Apostle and prophet furnished with the stamp and credentials of the fulness of his Divine commission. The deep meaning of this judgment and retribution thus pronounced by the mouth of St Paul, will, however, become still more evident if we proceed to consider the special features of the punishment inflicted on Elymas. Why was he smitten with blindness? Evidently with the design that that show of singular and extraordinary wisdom and knowledge, set up and maintained with so much of purpose by the false prophet, might be overthrown by

the hand of God. For it is evident that the principal feature of his character consists mainly in this, that by the means of his cunning he could contrive to cloak his wickedness under the guise of wisdom, and with this show of wisdom he seeks naturally enough to thwart and nullify the influence which the Apostles were exercising on the proconsul. There was in truth nothing in his heart but night and darkness. The hand of God consequently dispelled the want of conformity between what he seemed and what he really was, and effected that appearance in Elymas which corresponded with his real inward character. And, then, moreover, as a further consequence of this change, it was brought about that, instead of leading and guiding others as he had previously done, he is now forced to seek some one to lead and to guide himself. A similar revolution of things occurs in the history of the king of Babylon. When Nebuchadnezzar was at the summit of power and majesty, his appearance was that of the man who was the first to fulfil the injunction laid upon the human race, to replenish and subdue the whole earth; whereas he was in truth a man who did not, according to man's original destination, determine his actions by his own will, but who was subject to a foreign will and mind out of and beyond himself. He who in appearance was a perfect man, was in reality of a brutish nature (see Jerem. li. 34). If, then, by the hand of God, Nebuchadnezzar was taken from the state and condition of men, and placed in that of the brutes, nothing more was done thereby than to bring to light his true nature.

Now, not only does this analogy contribute to enable us to form a right apprehension of the true relation between the punishment and the occasion of it; but it also serves to set in a clear light a certain limitation of the punishment itself, which is too commonly overlooked. Paul expressly declares that a limit is set to his state of condemnation. For nothing else but this is implied in the words ἄχρι καιροῦ (ver. 11), although Meyer in loc., and Wahl in his Clavis s. v., maintain that these words must be understood of an indefinite period. For since καιρὸς—season, in itself is not at all definite; it must be limited by the context. How, then, can this season be referred to any thing else than to the state above-named, whose beginning is predicted in this very passage? Accordingly, these words cannot express any

other thought than this: Thou shalt not see the sun, until a season arrives in which thy not-seeing shall cease, and another state shall come on. Secondly, we ought not to overlook the fact, that even though ἄρχι or μέχρι do from the context derive the sense of continuance, yet their original signification of a limit is never lost (see Bleek zun Briefe an d., Hebr. i. 2, 456). Besides, the very sentence recalls the analogy of the night, in which the not-seeing the sun has invariably its natural limit in the season of morning. That perfectly arbitrary explanation, "unto the end," has its origin, so far as I can see, simply in the perplexity of those who were not able to find a satisfactory reason for this limitation of the punishment. But, now, in the analogous case already adduced, we likewise find a limitation of the time of punishment which, from the very first, is brought distinctly forward (see Dan. iv. 13, 31). Now, the parallel here presented to us in the history of Nebuchadnezzar shows us that the remark of Heinrich's, "the Jew was subsequently converted," is not so absurd as Meyer thinks. For from the history of Nebuchadnezzar, we see that by the destruction of that false semblance which shrouded the former majesty of the king, and by that correspondence between the outward state and the true inward temper which was established by the Deity, the first germ was furnished of a conversion internally, and consequently also of an external restoration. The end, that is to say of his punishment, was the beginning of his humility. Was it not possible, then, that the Jew Elymas, as soon as his pretensions to a Divine wisdom had, by a divine miracle, been set at nought; and when the darkness of night which clouded his eyes had awakened in all who saw them, and also in himself, the consciousness of the night which really reigned within his soul—might he not after this attain both to a knowledge of himself, and to a belief in the living God. Can, indeed, and would, Saul be likely to form any other idea than this of the Jew Elymas? For essentially are not the obstacles to faith, and the gainsaying of the Apostle's preaching by Elymas, exactly the same as that with which Saul of Tarsus might be reproached with towards the Church of Christ? And, on the other hand, was not the blindness of Saul likewise the consequence of that opposition to the will of the Lord in which his whole being was involved precisely as was the case with Elymas (see Grotius on Acts ix.

9) ? And was it not clearly the intention of St Luke to lead us to make this comparison, when he gave such prominence to the little trait that Elymas sought for some one to lead him by the hand (χειραγώγους), just as in St Paul's case he had previously reported the fact that certain persons took him by the hand (χειραγωγοῦντες ix. 8, cf. xxii. 11), in order to lead him to Damascus (cf. Zeller. Theolog. Jahrb. 1849, 419) ? If, then, Saul was conscious that in his own case (and if this fact especially constituted the very centre of his whole mental consciousness), that in a similar state of blindness inflicted on him by the manifestation of the Lord himself, he had been moved to prayer, and faith, and life, how could he but feel that there was every reason to indulge a similar hope of Elymas in his affliction, especially as his conscience told him that his own conversion was designed to be a pattern, full of encouragement and hope, for all such as should hereafter come to the faith and life (1 Tim. i. 16) ? That cutting and slaying sharpness of the words of Saul as he stood forward to rebuke the Jew do not, so far as we can see, furnish any obstacle to this comparison. For, from the very first, Saul had entered upon the career of determined antagonism to the old man within him (see Rom. vii. 14), and in this cutting and mortal combat he was constantly engaged (see Rom. vi. 6). Since then he thus attacks Elymas in the manner we have described, he completes his own self-condemnation, inasmuch as he sets forth in a public act externally to himself that which had been and was still going on within his inmost conscience.

What further became of Elymas, we are not told. However, the words, " for a season," encourage us to entertain a hope of him for the future. On the other hand, we are immediately informed what was the impression which this punishment had upon the heathens. " When the proconsul saw what was done he believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord" (ver. 12). Just as Paul himself by his own condemnation of himself, in which he gave up the real Jew to his deserved condemnation, had become free from the law (see Galat. ii. 19) and thereby had been qualified to go to the Gentiles, and for the sake of the Gentiles to become a Gentile, so also, in the present case, it is clear that the punishment of the Jew, and the word of the Apostle by the hand of the Lord, became the door by which the Gospel gained

an entrance to the heart of the Gentiles. It could not fail to happen that this result, in which Saul received the first actual seal of his call to the Apostleship, should remind him of the words of the Lord (Acts ix. 15), and also convey to him new information regarding it. It is to the heathens specially, and to their kings that Paul is primarily sent for his Apostolical work. The heathen world, therefore, in its organic shape, is marked out as the appointed field for his Apostolical labours. The heathens and their kings are here represented by the Roman Proconsul who, in this island of Cyprus, was the lieutenant of the emperor of Rome, the king of kings among the Gentiles. Accordingly, the preaching of Paul before this proconsul which attained its moving power by means of the miracle which had been wrought on the Jew Barjesus, possesses precisely that universal character which, from the beginning, was promised to the preaching of St Paul. But now, if the conversion of the proconsul possesses such great importance with regard to the subsequent labours of St Paul; in that case, would not the peculiar way in which the Gospel had gained its victory over the heart of the proconsul have appeared to him to be premonitory of the whole future of Israel in regard to the Gospel? In fact, we find that St Paul has developed and established the doctrine that the stumbling of Israel is the means by which the Gospel was made accessible to the Gentiles (see Rom. xi. 11; xii. 15). But now, since Elymas, on the occasion of the preaching of the Gospel, was plunged into his state of suffering just as Israel had been in his, it is obviously suggested thereby that we are to look upon Elymas (on whom "the mist and darkness of night had come" so that he could not see the sun) as the palpable manifestation and realisation of the Jews, on whom there had passed a spirit of sleep and blindness of the spiritual eyes (see Rom. xi. 8; 2 Cor. xiv. 16). This consideration throws a bright ray of light on the darkest speck in the story of Elymas —namely, on the words ἄχρι καιροῦ (v. 11). For in the passage where St Paul speaks of the stumbling of Israel he expresses, with full assurance, his persuasion that this state of the people would not be permanent, but would have a perfectly definite period for its duration (see Rom. xi. 25). As, therefore, the blindness of Elymas typifies the blindness and stumbling of Israel; so in the limit, which from the first, was set for the duration of that blind-

ness, we are to discern a hope of the ultimate conversion of Israel, and we dare not venture even to doubt but that this circumstance occurring on the first public assertion of his Apostolical might, gave the historical occasion to his whole doctrine of the position of Israel relatively to the Gospel. Moreover, in the very history of St Paul's own call, we were furnished with a point to which these words ἄχρι καιροῦ might well attach themselves. If, namely, in the series of those to whom Paul was to carry the name of Jesus, the name of Israel is mentioned last (see John ix. 15), we are not to understand this of any but an effectual preaching of the Gospel, which comes to Israel after the Gentiles have heard it and have become believers; and therefore the Gospel, proceeding from the Gentiles, is to return back to the starting point of all the Divine preaching. The case which is now before us makes this inversion of the original order strikingly noticeable. Elymas the Jew, the man enlightened by the law, and endowed with Gentile arts and wisdom, boasts himself to be a leader and teacher of the blind, and of those that are sitting in darkness (cf. Rom. ii. 19, 20). The preaching of St Paul strikes the guide blind and gives sight to the blind heathen, as the Lord had predicted of His work upon them (see John ix. 39). And this is the very turn of things which long ago Moses had indicated as the last and most efficient means of leading back the perplexed and wandering senses of Israel to their first beginning and their origin (see Deut. xxxii. 21; cf. Rom. xi. 14).

Having thus seen reason to regard the conversion of Sergius Paulus, the Roman Proconsul, not merely as the verification of the Apostolical power of St Paul, but also, in its context, as a highly significant event for the whole of the labours and teaching of the Apostle; we cannot well avoid supposing that the change of the Jewish name of Saul into the Roman one of Paul (which here first occurs and which is ever afterwards maintained (ver. 9), was occasioned by and founded on this fact. The judgment upon Elymas is on the one hand the self-condemnation of Saul, and on the other the exclusion of the Jews from the blessings of the Gospel. On this account the name Saul becomes the memorial of the old Jewish disobedience, and allusion to the mournful future is with good reason laid aside. On the contrary, the Gentile Paul is set forth as being converted by the word of the Apostle

and as the representative of the called Gentile world. On this account, therefore, does Saul adopt this Roman Gentile name. It is in order to designate thereby his new character and his hopeful destination for the Roman Gentile world. We have therefore good reason to regard as something more than mere conceit, the explanation of St Jerome. Apostolus a primo ecclesiae spolio proconsule, Sergio Paulo, victoriæ suæ trophæa retulit, erexitque vexillum, ut Paulus ex Saulo vocaretur. And if Baur (see Apostel Paulus S. 93) advances the opinion that the book of the Acts does of itself allude to this connection, it is a point that cannot be questioned. As to the rest that the same author and Zeller too (ibid S. 419) urge against the historical character of his narrative, it requires no refutation, now that we have pointed out the connection of the *minutest* detail both with the past and the following time.

§ 23. THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY THROUGH ASIA MINOR.

(Acts xiii. 13—chap. xiv. 28).

Occasionally perhaps a suspicion may arise that after a disposition has long prevailed to impute to the work we are examining an unprecedented want of connection, we are running into the opposite extreme. But in such a case attention must be called to the turn which our history now takes. It is easy to perceive, and indeed is generally acknowledged, that the latter portion of our history, differing in this respect altogether from the first, proceeds with its narrative by one unbroken thread. It is obvious that this steady uninterrupted connection is furnished by the progressive history of the Apostle Paul. And if now it should be said (as after Grotius it has been frequently asserted) that in this second portion of his work it has been the sole object of the writer to furnish a connected narrative of the fortunes and labours of St Paul, against such a position two grave difficulties at once start up. On the one hand we cannot escape the question, how could any writer who had begun with narrating circumstantially and at length, the fundamental features and first "origines" of the Church, afterwards in the same work confine his attention exclusively to the proceedings of one individual, and with the

greatest possible care enter into the minutest and most special incidents and circumstances in such wise as to pass over in total silence whatever had no immediate connection with the personal history of this individual? Further, the more distinctly obvious it becomes in the course of this history of St Paul that our author had a perfectly correct idea of historical coherence, the more inconceivable on that account does it appear to us that the earlier details of Paul's history, which are narrated at length, do not, however, form the introduction to the subsequent well-connected series, in which his doings and sufferings are depicted, but appear to be but so many loose fragments hastily put together and stuck into the first portion of the work. If, therefore, we should feel disposed to advance the position (which, indeed, some have boldly ventured to take and to maintain), that the second half of the Acts has no clear and demonstrable connection with the first, the conviction would necessarily enforce itself on our minds, that simply for the sake of this introduction to St Paul's history, it would be utterly impossible to dispense with the first half if we really desire to understand the second. Now no one would ever have involved himself in these perplexities of an untenable hypothesis, had he duly weighed a little and apparently insignificant circumstance in our narrative. It is only with a very slight hint that St Luke alludes for the first time to the new name of Saul of Tarsus (xiii. 9). What this slight hint is intended in this place to convey, we see clearly enough from the fact that henceforward the narrative adheres as exclusively to the new name as on every former occasion it employed none but the old one to designate the Apostle. There is therefore, we see, the greater reason for inquiring into the cause of this change which was obviously intentional and well considered, as it seems far more natural, and more in conformity with other biblical analogies, for such a change of name to occur at the time when the great and unparalleled change was effected in the whole being and character of St Paul. Luke, indeed, has not omitted to furnish us with ample information even on this point. We have already frequently remarked how, on every previous mention of Saul, the history has carefully maintained his subordinate position (cf. ix. 27, xi. 30, xiii. 1, 2). Indeed, especial attention is due to the fact that, even on the occasion of the visit of the

two Apostolical missionaries to Paphos, the superiority and precedence of Barnabas is prominently noticed (see ver. 7). Now, in contrast with this fact, how significant is it that our narrative proceeds with the following words, *ἀναχθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ Πάφου οἱ περὶ Παῦλον* (ver. 13). For it is quite obvious that the combination *οἱ περὶ Παῦλον* is here employed in the old classical sense, according to which it throws a certain weight on the mention of a particular person, together with his attendants and companions (see Bernhardy, Griech. Syntax. S. 263, Matthiæ Griech. Gramm. P. 1159, 1160). All at once, therefore, is Paul brought forth from the retired and subordinate position he had hitherto held, and appears not only to be placed on an equality with Barnabas, but in a very marked way is pointed out as the ruling and leading personage. And when once the historian has in so significant a manner established this prominent position for the Apostle, it is ever afterwards given him ; for as to the passages xiv. 14, xv. 12 and 25, there, as will appear by and by, the case is a peculiar one in both instances, and herein we have a clear answer given to the question formerly propounded. For, by this change of treatment, so closely corresponding to the change of name, it is placed beyond doubt that the change of name is intended to point, not so much to a change of being and character, as rather to that of the manifestation. For the change that has now been really effected is this: that call of St Paul to the Apostleship, which had hitherto been kept secret, was first of all publicly proclaimed, by the way in which he now assumed a prominent position at Paphos, and his vocation thereby attained, as it was intended, to its historical development and influence. It is therefore only natural to suppose that Barnabas, having witnessed this interference of Saul thus attended with power, which no doubt reminded him of the Apostolical proceedings of Peter against Ananias and Sapphira, and against Simon the magician, from that time forward declined the foremost position. What he had himself observed on this occasion must have convinced him that that seeing of the Lord which, as he was previously aware, had been vouchsafed to Saul in a manner so extraordinary, was intended to have in his instance the same significance and import, as a similar seeing had possessed in the case of the twelve Apostles. He must consequently have felt

an inward impulse constraining him to abandon the precedence of the Apostle, which, on former occasions, he had taken; and it is not an improbable conjecture that John Mark may have been the arbiter who decided the question.

Now, while these remarks have no other object and meaning than to furnish an explanation, so much needed, of that change of name which here occurs with so many evident marks of design, they at the same time also supply a key to the right understanding of the plan of the whole book. In the variation of the name of the Apostle, which here takes place, a hint is given as to the law which St Luke had recognized and adopted for the right comprehension and construction of this portion of history: that, namely, whatever has its basis in the inner and secret character, when once it attains to its manifestation and reality, presents itself at once as a regulating and definitive authority, whereas that which had its origin and foundation in the realm of external things, is not designed even in those cases where it is ennobled and pervaded by the Spirit, to establish itself and to prevail, but rather to retire again into its source. Simon Barjona received his new name, which pointed to that foundation of rock created within him by the Spirit, long before that new nature manifested itself, for even after that he did too often permit the weakness and vacillation of his internal character to show itself (cf. John i. 43). And when at last St Peter was set forth by the Holy Ghost as the rock upon which all the waves of the world must break, it was not long before he withdrew again from the public arena and retired. But the course pursued by the Apostle Paul is the very opposite of all that. In a few days he is transformed from a bloody persecutor of Jesus into a zealous confessor of that holy name. Yet, in spite of this change of his whole being, Saul still remains in deep retirement and privacy, until the course of circumstances, which were wholly beyond his control, sets him forth as a newly created and wonderfully endowed character. And this outward manifestation of his inward being is even the token that henceforward he is to be the leader and guide of the whole of the new development which has now commenced. And does not this contrast very closely correspond with what the Lord himself has maintained ever since His Ascension, and with the delineation and

exhibition of which our present history took its start? Is it not necessary that so long as the Lord withdraws His bodily presence from the sphere of earth into the heavens—from the domain of visible and external things into that of the invisible and spiritual —he who has been called out of the sphere of the Spirit should the while, so far as regards his operations and labours, take the precedence of him who was called within the sphere of externality—that the former must become the organ for working on the whole body, while the latter points by his presence to a future of a different kind. And now, then, that we have seen how both the name and the position of St Paul, which occur at the very beginning of our present section, show clearly enough that Luke gives his readers credit for more care and consideration than they generally possess; and now that this little trait, apparently so trifling, has again called our attention to the mysterious course and connection which run through the history recorded in the present work, we may again take up the thread of the narrative before us.

This band of Apostolical missionaries start on their travels from Paphos, the principal city in the west of Cyprus, and proceed to Perga on the coast of Pamphylia. The question naturally arises: What was it that induced them to take this route? In this case, too, we get an answer very similar to that we arrived at when we sought for the cause which led them to make Cyprus their destination when leaving Antioch. As on that occasion, the personal circumstances of Barnabas influenced the choice of the voyage to Cyprus, so in the present case the determining motive must have been St Paul's connexion with Asia Minor. To Cilicia, indeed, the country in which lay the native town of Saul, they could not proceed without turning aside too widely from the general direction of their journey towards the land of the west. But by sailing to Perga, they would yet go to those parts of the west which lay nearest them, and which at the same time adjoined the native country of the Apostle. On the one hand, therefore, we see that, upon their departure from Paphos, Saul exercised the same decisive influence as Barnabas did when they started from Seleucia; and on the other, that even upon the change of the guiding personage, the principle of natural attraction still exercised a co-operating influence upon the direction

assigned to their missionary labours. Now, the first event which followed their arrival at Perga was the withdrawal of John Mark from Paul and Barnabas, and his return to Jerusalem. That there existed no outward motive for this separation, becomes clear to our minds from the fact, that subsequently it is urged by St Paul as an objection to St Mark (see xv. 38). Some weakness of faith therefore must have come upon him. According to Col. iv. 10, Mark was a relation of Barnabas. This tie of blood may possibly have been the chief motive of his accompanying Barnabas in his travels from Jerusalem, and afterwards from Antioch to this place. In that case the change in the head of the work which had taken place at Paphos may have had an unfavourable effect on his mind. Besides, the further these messengers of the Gospel advanced on their travels—and especially from the time when St Paul (whose call was properly to be the Apostle of the Gentiles) had been manifested to the Church in the fulness of his Apostolical powers—it must have become more and more distinctly evident, that the object in view was nothing less than to found a Church among the Gentiles, which not only should have the same independence as the Church of the Jews, but also was destined one day to receive into its bosom the whole of the Israelitish community. For an Israelite not merely to submit to, but to take an active part in, bringing about this new turn in the history of salvation, would indeed be an instance of self-renunciation perfectly uncommon. It readily admits, therefore, of explanation if John Mark, a Jew by birth, and a native of Jerusalem (see xii. 12), was incapable of such a degree of self-renunciation.

Now, why is it that Paul and Barnabas proceed at once inland from Perga, and go straight on to Antioch with the surname of *τῆς Πισιδίας* or *ἡ πρὸς τῇ Πισιδίᾳ* (see Winer biblisch. Realwörterbuch. i. 61)? The reason of this was probably the fact that there existed in this city a considerable Jewish community which was likely to furnish a natural centre for their evangelical labours among the Gentiles of Asia Minor. This Antioch was in truth the first city in which the preaching of the two Apostolical missionaries struck a firm root, and founded a Church. Here, therefore, for the first time do we find our narrative entering at length on the whole of the doings and conduct of both. But in

this report we learn from an actual instance, how earnest they were in addressing themselves first of all to the synagogue. For the discourse of St Paul in the synagogue is evidently set forth as that which laid the foundation of the Church, and with this "standing up" in the congregation of the Jews, all the subsequent proceedings of Paul and Barnabas in the city of Antioch are connected.

And the more that this recourse to the synagogue, even on the occasion of the founding of the first Church that was established by the labours of St Paul, comes before us as fraught with significance, the less able are we to avoid noticing the objection which Baur has drawn from this very circumstance, and urged against the historical accuracy of the "Acts of the Apostles." It is in his essay on the object and occasion of the Epistle to the Romans (see Tübinger Zeitschrift fur Theologie 1836, p. 100—106). Baur, for instance, calls attention to the fact, that it is not merely in the present passage that the Acts of the Apostles represent the synagogues as the stepping-stones by which the Apostles passed from the Jews to the Gentiles; but in every place the order observed is, that the Jews are the first to have the Gospel preached to them, and that it is only when they have rejected it that the Apostles turn exclusively to the Gentiles. But in so doing Baur urges, our book ascribes to Paul a position which we are forced to condemn as inconsistent with historical truth, inasmuch as it is irreconcilable with the Apostle's own statements, and with the independence of his call to be the Apostle of the Gentiles. And this argument, in derogation of the historical fidelity of the "Acts of the Apostles," is not only repeated by Baur himself in his work on the Apostle Paul (see p. 364—367), and by Zeller (see Theolog. Jahrb. 1849 p. 587—591), but its validity is even allowed by Schneckenburger (see his Zweck d. Apostelgesch. p. 106). Now, I am very far from going to call in question the fact here asserted; and I am not disposed in the least to deny that, by the frequent repetition of one and the same turn, which the course of the narrative takes at different places, St Luke evidently designed to set up a general rule by the means of individual instances; but still I am very far from admitting that any valid objection to the historical accuracy of the proceeding of Paul is furnished thereby.

On the contrary, I maintain that we have herein a highly characteristic trait which agrees in the most striking manner possible with that idea of the Apostle's character which has generally been acknowledged to be the historical one.

When then, in the case of St Paul, we remember that he was called to be the Apostle of the Gentiles, and that the first occasion on which he stood forward in this character on the scene of the labours of the Gospel was at a time when, on the one hand, the hostility of the Jews had declared itself in the most unmistakeable way; and when, on the other, the Gentiles had displayed a susceptibility for its reception no less indisputably and prominently, we feel, no doubt, an inclination to expect that he would, without waiting for any further instructions, hold himself to be consigned to the Gentiles, and that he would therefore straightway turn to them. This expectation, however, is at issue with the narrative of the Acts, and the merit belongs to the above-named critics, that they were the first to awaken attention to this circumstance, which in any case is most deserving of consideration. But then, without further proofs, they start at once from the assumed correctness of their view, and set themselves to explain the fact before us, by ascribing to the author of the Acts the adoption of a peculiar view from merely subjective considerations. "Paul," they maintain, "dared not to preach directly to the Gentiles; that would be to derogate from the privilege of the Jews, and to do that, would prove that he could not possibly be an Apostle" (see Schneckenburger. ibid.).

According to this theory, then, our history of the labours of St Paul must have suffered a little from an accommodation to Jewish interests. Such is the opinion of this school; as in truth they think they can throughout this historical narrative point out a Judaising stamp in a multitude of single traits. Let us examine then a little more closely the explanation thus offered of the matter before us. We are willing to concede the assertion, that it is an honour which Saul pays to the Jews in turning every where first of all to them with his preaching. But in no one single passage does our narrative stop at the simple mention of this preaching to the Jews, but it invariably goes on to its further course and consequence, and depicts that which followed such preaching even as the principal point. Now, if we keep the fact before our minds

(and it is precisely to this that the narrative directs our attention) then we shall see this honour soon converted into still greater dishonour. In one spot only, namely Berea, is the praise given to the Jews of having readily received the teaching of St Paul (see xvii. 11). In all other places the rapidly following issue invariably is this: that with the exception of a small vanishing number, the Jews as a body, are vehemently embittered against the Gospel, and not content with refusing themselves to have anything to do with it, they persecute to death the ambassadors, and, in every way possible, hinder others from coming to the faith. And not merely is this result of preaching the Gospel to the Jews circumstantially related; but also in the present passage we have reported the sentence of rejection which to their condemnation the Apostles must fain pass on the unbelieving Israelites (see xiii. 16; xviii. 6; xxviii. 25—28). In short, it is absolutely incredible that these circumstances (which, however, it is not possible to separate from those on which the above-named critics build their hypothesis), could have drawn their origin from any Judaising interest soever. And, now, let a man contemplate the whole of that course which the history of our work pursues. Is it in fact any other than that from Jerusalem to Rome? It is as such that it has hitherto shown itself to us, and as such it will be exhibited even yet more clearly and brightly as it advances towards its end. If, then, alongside of this pretendedly Judaising element there exists a still stronger and more decided anti-Judaising one; and if, moreover, the whole tendency is directed to this end; the showing, namely, by the means of great and decisive facts, how God's kingdom passed from the Jews to the Gentiles; then the attempt to explain an unexpected circumstance amidst the labours of St Paul, by so improbable and inconsistent a theory, appears to us something more than startling.

Must we then actually admit, without further consideration, the correctness of this view of the labours of the Apostle of the Gentiles? May not the case with it be the same as with the anticipation (so generally diffused), that as soon as the Israelites had exhibited their growing and hardened obduracy against the preaching of the Gospel, the first Apostles would forthwith turn to the Gentiles, and go to the uttermost parts of the world? Now, in the latter instance, it is precisely a very different result that is

brought and set before us as the true historical one. And may it not then in our case likewise be similarly shown that, just as the Apostles, contrary to all expectation, do not immediately betake themselves to the Gentiles, so most unexpectedly the Apostle Paul does betake himself to the Jews. It is our wish closely to follow the track which has been pointed out by these critical antagonists of our narrative: we will take the Epistles of St Paul as our standard, and see whether they realize or disappoint the expectation thus raised. In following this course, we have an advantage which is very rare, if perhaps it be not unique in disputed matters of this kind. When, in the Epistles of Paul we look around to see where we may hope to find some information with regard to the peculiarity here in discussion, it might easily happen that we selected those very Epistles, or those portions of Epistles, which, without any grounds at all, have been called into question and attacked in the schools. But now we find ourselves so luckily situated, that we are in a condition to decide this question by a single passage; and not only does that passage belong to an Epistle, whose genuineness has not as yet been assailed, but one which this very critical school has been peculiarly fond of pronouncing a genuine Pauline Epistle, and that too in the very same context as that from which we are about to adduce a passage to explain our views. I mean the section of the Epistle contained in chap. ix.—xi. It is well known that Baur in his essay on the scope and object of the Pauline Epistle to the Romans has attempted to set up this very section as the proper centre of the whole Epistle, and that he has subsequently repeated this opinion in his essay on the Apostle Paul. Naturally this is not the place to discuss the correctness of this assertion. Here we have simply to acknowledge with gratitude, that the section of the Pauline writings, which more than any other has been neglected and disregarded, has by this assertion been drawn from such unmerited neglect. We are thankful for it; on the one hand, because we purpose to refer to that section of St Paul's writings, as throwing light on a peculiar feature in the life and doctrine of this Apostle; and, on the other, because we wish to appeal to it in controversy with these very critics. And further, we have here also this advantage, that we must acknowledge the explanation which Baur has given of this section, to be in all essential

points perfectly correct; and that, in particular, we cannot refuse to award to him the merit of having satisfactorily solved the chief difficulty on which all previous commentators had been shipwrecked.

However, it is impossible to understand this particular section of the Epistle—even so far as it bears upon the question before us, unless we first take a brief review of its preceding portions. With the most eminent commentators, we assume that St Paul, as in the presence of the imperial city of which the community to which he was writing formed the spiritual centre, follows in this Epistle an universal tendency; and that, therefore, throughout the Epistle he maintains a degree of objectivity which he nowhere else does. Now, in accordance with the history of the Apostle, as well as with his very destination, the true centre of all Paul's preaching cannot be any other than the attempt to point out how Christ became the Redeemer and the Saviour of the whole of man's sinful and death-doomed nature. For his own personal experience had wrought in his conscience an indelible conviction of a rebellion against God inherent in the flesh and blood of man, and of the annihilation of all human life as resulting immediately therefrom; and, on the other hand, the very Gentiles to whom he was primarily assigned, exhibited the reality of this rebellion and this death in all the facts and varying states of universal history. Moreover, as in his own case, the name of Jesus had proved the adequate and all-sufficient redemption from the very abyss of perversity and corruption, so now, it was this same name that he was called upon to preach to the lost heathen. If, now, we realise to our mind the fact, that in such a case St Paul would naturally feel himself called upon to set forth in connection the leading ideas of which his teaching consisted, we have the very case which is presented to us in the composition of the Epistle to the Romans. Accordingly, we cannot but pronounce it perfectly consistent, if the Apostle commences with an exposition of the universal sinfulness of man, as, it is well known, he has done in that portion of the Epistle which ends at chap. iii. 20. When then, in contrast with this universal need, he goes on to depict the universal salvation, evidently he is only doing what was requisite for his purpose, viz., establishing its universality likewise. As St Peter, with a simi-

lar object in view, alleged no other condition of salvation than faith (see ch. x. 13), and by this declaration moved to their inmost soul those who thereupon became the first-fruits of the Gentiles, so here also did St Paul, with much design, lay unqualified stress on faith as a sufficient qualification on man's part for salvation (see Rom. iii. 22, and compare i. 17). It is true enough that the instances he employs to illustrate this view had been furnished him already in the economy of the Old Testament; but St Paul shews, that this circumstance does not by any means form a bar to the universal necessity of this simple condition of salvation. For whereas, it is said of Abraham, in respect of faith, that he was as much the father of the believing uncircumcision as of the unbelieving circumcision, and as also David, whom, he believes, is in a state which greatly resembles that of the heathen, and, therefore, the subject-matter of his faith is even such as is necessary first and foremost for the Gentiles (see Rom. iv. 7—9; compare Acts x. 43). And the narrative, after dwelling a while on this resting point that it has won (see v. 1—11), takes up anew this fundamental thought, and considers it under both its aspects, in order to place it under yet another comprehensive point of view. The universal need of salvation is made apparent by shewing the connection between the whole human race and Adam's sin and death; while on the other hand, the universal susceptibility of mankind for salvation is exhibited by presenting, as the contrast of Adam, Jesus Christ, whose life and righteousness are influences no less potent on the whole human race than were the transgression and death of Adam (vv. 12—21). Hereupon two objects, which are obviously suggested by the general nature of the case itself, furnish a fresh occasion to the Apostle for working out his thoughts under yet other aspects and giving them still greater profundity (vi.—vii. 25). And then he is able to revert to his original object; and he commences the description of the glorious consequences and the infinite blessedness of the salvation thus accomplished by Jesus, as well for the individual man as for the life of nature and for the spirit, no less than for the body, and finally concludes his expostulations and statements with a glorious hymn of triumph (see viii. 1—39).

The whole of the Epistle, as hitherto detailed, revolves around the question: how does the individual man attain to salvation?

Now this question is absolutely the most necessary one; and the right answer to it is at all times man's greatest want. St Paul's treatment of the subject hitherto is highly satisfactory and adequate. As now in this domain of the development of salvation, the position of this question is in general maintained to be the only one, people have accustomed themselves to see in these eight chapters of the Epistle to the Romans a full exposition and sum total of St Paul's doctrine of faith. But at the same time the inquiry is not to be easily got rid of, whether this question be the only admissible one; or if there be not yet another besides, and that too not simply allowable, but even imperatively urgent. If it is, and ever will be, the first and most necessary inquiry with man: how does the individual attain to salvation? it may well be asked, in the second place, how also are nations to arrive at it? In the doctrine of salvation is there then only an individual position, and not also a national one? Ever since the days of Abraham, however, salvation has assumed a national shape, which is maintained throughout the times of the Old Testament at least;—nay even in the times of the New—in the times of the Spirit we cannot but have observed in the course of our development an adherence to this national form of salvation.

It is true that the opinion has been advanced that this peculiar feature of the scheme of redemption came to an end, as the unbelief of the Jews shewed itself even more and more distinctly, and as the Apostleship of Saul became more influential. And in fact it does seem as if it were so when we consider certain frequent and not unusual statements of this Apostle. He does, no doubt, revert occasionally to the histories of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as it were to a holy and sacred domain; but, on the other hand, as we see from the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, he never omits an occasion of calling attention to, and expressly asserting, the untenable nature of those claims which the Jews set up on the ground of the divine character of their past history. And, moreover, as St Paul found that the proper vocation of his life lay not among his countrymen, but among the Gentiles of many different nations and countries; so also by his teaching and proceedings, he might easily give rise to an impression that he was insensible to any claims of nationality within the domain of faith, and that he

acknowledged therein none but an individual position. However, that this appearance is delusive will be plainly shewn by that portion of his Epistle to the Romans which we are next to consider.

St Paul opens this section with a solemn confession, such as never has had its fellow. A two-fold assertion is accompanied with a triple attestation and confirmation. For what end is this extraordinary solemnity and gravity? Even because, in the first case, that which he wishes to affirm is drawn from his own inmost conscience, and has no confidant; and on the other, because it apparently contradicts all that people have hitherto seen or heard of him. He speaks of a great sorrow of heart and of unceasing woe. It is his sorrow and grief of heart, to be separated and cut off from his brethren according to the flesh (see vv. 2. 3). He tells them that he has withdrawn himself from them because they had rejected the Messiah on whom he had believed. Thus he stands with Christ on the one side, and the Jews on the other, and between them is an impassable gulf. And the pain and grief of the Apostle is so great and so vehement, that he is willing, and expresses his readiness to be cut off even from Christ, the only and the eternal ground of all salvation, if thereby he might be able to win over his brethren to the faith. Who would have given credence to this assertion of Paul, had he not so solemnly affirmed it? Deeply hidden, a secret spark of love, however, for his people still glows in the heart of the Apostle, and nothing can be compared with its intensity but the love which, on one occasion, Moses evinced for the people entrusted to his care. When, for instance, everything turned upon the contingency of the rebellion of the people of Israel at Mount Sinai being pardoned by Jehovah, Moses cried unto the Lord "And now forgive them their trespass; and if not, then blot me, I pray thee, out of the book that thou hast written." And if we feel a wish to weigh against each other these declarations of great love, we cannot but confess that the preference is due to that of the Apostle of Jesus Christ over that of the leader of Israel. For even by his office and history the latter stands before us as the very representative of Israel in such a way as no one else ever has been; whereas the former possessed no official relation soever to Israel, and had indeed been cast off

by Israel. Moreover, to the Apostle, communion with Jesus Christ was a far higher blessing than the insertion of his name in the book of life could have been to the prophet of the Old Testament. This comparison, however, is a very secondary matter. Still it is not without its instruction to weigh these two manifestations of love somewhat in the way that Bengel has already done in the following words of his Gnomon on Rom. ix. 3 : de mensura amoris in Mosi et Paulo non facile est existimare. Eum enim modulus ratiocinationum nostrarum non capit, sicut heroum bellicorum animos non capit parvulus. But while we dwell in thought on the immeasurable depths of this love, let us not lose sight of the direction it takes. In both instances it is a divinely kindled flame of love for one's own people, such as no streams of earth nor floods of hell can ever quench (see Song of Sol. viii. 7). But while, in the case of Moses, it seems quite natural ; in that of St Paul it appears the more surprising, the more unexpected it is.

Now how is it that St Paul should, in this particular passage, give utterance in such express and lengthened terms to his love for his own countrymen, while in no other place does he speak of it, or allow any sign of it to be shown ? The great contrast between the close of the eighth and the opening of the ninth chapter affords a very simple explanation of this phenomenon. In fact, the enthusiasm and the joy, the certainty of victory, and the triumphant jubilee for the whole of the present blessedness of the New Testament, nowhere rises so high and nowhere soars upwards on so bold and strong a wing as even in this joyous close of the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Well, therefore, may we say : if there had been no counterpoise to this passage, it would have been altogether out of unison with the otherwise equable tone of the New Testament. Care, therefore, has been taken that this necessary counterpoise should immediately be added in a perfectly natural manner. Scarcely, for instance, has the Apostle ascended in thought to the towering height of the bliss of heaven, ere he feels himself in his inmost consciousness driven down again, to glance at that abyss of abandonment by God and worldly degradation, to whose horrors his own flesh and blood had exposed themselves. The thought and the contemplation of their wretchedness incessantly afflicts him (ἀδιάλειπτος) :

it must therefore have pervaded his whole mind and being. And naturally must this dark shade on his inmost consciousness be deepened, the more distinctly, the more intensely, and the more brightly the mid-day sun of God's grace shone around the Apostle's heart. Ought he then in silence to conceal this dark nightly aspect of his thoughts and feelings? As a general rule he does so: but here such concealment must have appeared to him unnatural. After having permitted their brightest aspect to shine forth in all its brilliancy, he must have done violence to his own feelings had be shunned to exhibit also to his readers that deeper shade which darkened his inmost being. No doubt he would gladly have exercised such self-constraint, had he not felt that, by yielding to the inner pressure of his conscience, he would not only satisfy his own heart but also do good service to his readers. For it must not for a moment be forgotten, that the Apostle is not engaged in merely writing a friendly and confidential Epistle to the Church at Rome, but that the task he has set himself is that of conveying to them a complete and comprehensive statement of the Gospel which he preached. On this account, we must steadily keep in view the conviction, that St Paul allows free play to his own subjective feelings and sentiments only so far as they will contribute to the completion of his objective purpose. And this is precisely the case in the instance before us.

For in truth, with every unprejudiced mind, and indeed with all whose prejudices are not very strong, there cannot be a doubt that the whole line of thought, which commencing with ix. 6, is carried on to the end of the eleventh chapter, has its origin and outlet in the triumphant declaration of the Apostle which forms the opening of the ninth chapter. And surely, when a writer appeals in the way that St Paul here does to the inmost source of his own thoughts and feelings, it is nothing less than a total disregard of every rational principle of interpretation, obstinately to look for some external motives to elucidate such a passage, especially if no better can be found than the hypothesis that the Church at Rome consisted mainly of Jewish Christians. His sorrowful love for his people drives the Apostle to explain himself fully on the whole position of Israel. It is impossible for him to take one step forward even in the course of his previous reflections, unless he first gives an account of the position which Israel,

as a nation, held relatively to that salvation which was the subject of his preaching and praise. And might he not fairly give the believing heathens credit for a disposition to follow him readily along such a chain of thought? And must not the believing Gentiles have felt in their minds a desire to learn what had become of Israel's original call to salvation? St Paul had indeed already told them that Abraham was also their father (see iv. 12—17), and informed them that the Gentiles, as branches of the wild olive-tree, had been grafted into the goodly olive-tree, which is the people of Israel (see xi. 17, 18). Certainly that indifference and hard-heartedness about the present and future destiny of Israel which became apparent in the Church even as early as in the days of Ambrose, and which has been also maintained down to the most recent times (see Wernerus de vana spe insignis Judæorum conversionis. Lips. 1741 p. 13—15), were not, to judge from these explanations, in agreement with the feelings of St Paul. Consequently the very circumstance, that such sentiments towards Israel could spring up and obstinately hold their place within the Gentile Church, ought to be looked upon as an obvious proof, that St Paul had the fullest spiritual justification for thus seeking to interest the most eminent of the Gentile Churches in the present and future destiny of the people of Israel—matters which lay so near to his own heart.

Now, in the course of his meditations upon Israel, the first thing that occurs to St Paul, and which he forthwith brings forward, is the proposition that a sentence of blindness had been passed by God upon Israel (see ix. 11—22; xi. 25). Now, if one stops at this idea and solves it by the immediate context, and generally by the whole circle of biblical ideas to which it belongs, then not only has it in itself an intolerable harshness, but it also stands in irreconcilable contradiction to the procedure, which the history of the Apostles describes St Paul as adopting throughout his missionary voyages. For if, by an irrevocable decree, Israel had been consigned to unbelief and falling away, and if this was St Paul's unqualified conviction; it certainly does appear to be a most unexplicable proceeding to act as he did with each synagogue as if no such destiny existed, although on every occasion he gained nothing more by so doing than a most unprofitable delay in his appointed career of converting the Gentiles. If this is the real state of

the case, then indeed we can understand how any one might have come to the idea that the historical fidelity of these accounts, when contrasted with the authentic statements of the Apostle, must be pronounced questionable. But we are here in the favourable position that those very critics who tied this knot, themselves furnish a hand to help to undo it. For instance Baur says : the whole section (Rom. ix.—xi.) demonstrates that the Apostle takes up two different positions, either of which, when *urged in its extreme rigor*, excludes the other. Whereas, in the ninth chapter, he speaks the language of absolute predestination, in the tenth again everything is referred back to man's own free will; and what in the ninth chapter can apparently be only understood of the unconditional reprobation of a portion of mankind, is in the eleventh exhibited as a merely temporary and transient exclusion (see Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie 1836, 83—84 ; Paulus S. 353). These assertions of Baur are perfectly in accordance with the state of the case in the present section, and well calculated to furnish a powerful counteraction to the twofold onesidedness which has been evinced in the exposition of this section. In the present place the only duty incumbent on us is simply to point out the relation in which this section stands to the account in the Apostolical history, which has been objected to in regard to St Paul's treatment of the synagogues. And, in this respect, we maintain, that, by means of the perfectly correct exposition of Baur, which we have just quoted, the whole matter at once assumes another shape from what it presented in consequence of one only of the two elements demanding consideration having been brought forward. We now perceive that in the Apostle's statements with regard to the national position of the Jews relatively to redemption, he not only gave due weight to the principle of the Divine causation, but he also insisted no less forcibly on the element of man's freedom. But, then, if the turning away of Israel admits of being considered from under the aspect of human liberty and volition, room is again afforded for supposing an influence on Israel to be possible, and consequently for the preaching of the Gospel to them. Since, however, as Baur has correctly observed, these two series of ideas do not admit of being comprised in one logical synthesis, the only question would be, whether the idea of the absolutely working causation of God,

does not interfere with, and preclude, every earnest appeal to that liberty which draws its decisions from itself, so that even though the possibility of a preaching to the Jews be generally conceivable, still in its special application, such a possibility would be evanescent. Thus, then, the necessity arises not merely for our conceiving of these two modes of consideration—the Divine, that is, and the human—as proceeding side by side, but also of our taking in view their respective relations. For, in truth, the case stands with these two opposites, exactly as it stands with many others that are contained in holy writ: while, namely, it is impossible to find a logical solution of them, the adjustment of both still admits of being historically pointed out.

For instance, in regard to evil: alongside of the assertion of the Divine causality, Scripture not only asserts a human causality with equal distinctness, (and indeed, from reasons readily conceivable, with still greater precision), but it also shows that the human causality, which produces the evil, presupposes another Divine causality which is working for good. Not only does Jehovah know that Pharoah will harden his heart against the command to let Israel go (see Exod. iii. 19, 20), but He also says to Moses before he proceeds to Egypt: "I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go." Now, if we ask of the further course of the history: in what way did Jehovah harden the heart of Pharoah? we see that Jehovah reveals himself to the king of Egypt as the God of Israel, and as the God of gods, and requires him to help his people to perform a true and holy worship. Now this revelation and commandment does involve (it is undeniable) a good and gracious will towards Pharoah. He is deemed worthy to see not only the might and majesty of Jehovah, but also to contribute essentially to the honour and glory of His name in the midst of his people and so far as lay in him to co-operate with them therein. But even this benignant and merciful condescension on God's part, which was throughout designed to win over, if possible, the free determination of Pharoah, so that from the very first he should allow the people of Israel to celebrate their religious worship, not, however, without a voluntary and independent participation on the part of the Gentiles, is by Pharoah altogether misunderstood and abused. Instead of his heart being won over and softened by such an exhibition of the grace of God, it

is made the very occasion and cause of his alienation and of the hardening of his heart. Moses, therefore, as the instrument and minister of the Almighty's gracious and merciful purpose towards Pharoah, thereby becomes to him the executioner of the Divine sentence of obduracy and hardness of heart. This destiny, therefore, over the king of Egypt was so far from being an hindrance of God's gracious intentions towards him, that the very preaching of the latter was in his case the means of the fulfilment of the sentence passed upon him.

And still more distinctly is the same truth shewn in the history of the call of the prophet Isaiah. Avowedly he was called expressly and exclusively for the purpose of making his people insensible to, and ill-disposed for, the preaching of the Gospel, in order that they might not be converted, and God might not aid them (Is. vi. 9, 10). Now, as we have reason to assume that Isaiah actually carried out the vocation he had received; consequently it is in the discourses which have come down to us, addressed to the people of Israel, that we have before us the mode in which he fulfilled his mission. Now these discourses collectively have for their essential subject-matter the offer of God's grace, and redemption to his people Israel. Consequently in this case also, the passing of the sentence of rejection is brought about simply by the preaching of grace. Now, was there any reason why St Paul should have understood the matter differently? The section before us shews that he takes the hardening of Israel, of which he speaks, in no other light than that, in which this idea has been exhibited in the two chief passages of the Old Testament. If, for instance, St Paul says that the Jews had not believed, and in these words describes their present condition from its subjective aspect (see Rom. x. 16), he assuredly does not mean that they had remained in the same state that they were in previously; but that this had been added to their former perversity, and that thereby they had filled up the measure of their alienation from God. On this account he lays great stress on the circumstance that they had heard the preaching which had been brought to them by the messengers of God (see x. 15, 18—21), and, in order that no one might doubt that this Divine message and sending had for its object anything else than peace and

happiness, he confirms this his own assertion with a prophetical declaration from the Old Testament (see x. 15). Since, however, what he is chiefly concerned about is, that under the peace and the blessings which form the contents of the above-named message, his readers may understand the salvation of the New Testament to be meant, he therefore in another passage expresses this fact in his own peculiar manner. Of the Jews he says: "They submitted not themselves unto the righteousness of God" (see x. 3). Since now the righteousness of God rightly and properly is the Pauline designation for the contents of the Gospel of Christ; consequently the assertions of the Apostle come unquestionably to this, that salvation of God in Jesus Christ is offered fully and unreservedly to the Jews, with the express design that they should be delivered by it. Just, therefore, as St Paul likewise adduces in this context the same passage of Joel, which promises salvation by calling upon the name of the Lord (see x. 13), as St Peter brought forward in his Pentecostal address; so also it is evident that of God's designs for the redemption of Israel he held exactly the same conviction as that which we have discovered in the words and conduct of St Peter at Jerusalem. Considered from this side, the Divine design of salvation appears to have proved, through the unbelief and disobedience of Israel, the ruin of the people.

Still more tersely does this view of Divine and human causality appear to be set forth in a figure which St Paul has here borrowed from the Old Testament. He conceives of the offered salvation in Christ under the figure of a stone. In its most immediate purpose, as follows from the language of Isaiah's prophecy (xxviii. 16), this rock was designed to furnish a sure holding and a steady support, just as indeed Jehovah himself in an earlier passage is called absolutely the rock (Deut. xxxii. 4, 15, 18). But now on a rock it is not only possible to place one's feet in order to gain a firm footing on it; but one may as readily stumble on it and lose the footing one has already gained. And this is precisely what has befallen Israel with regard to the salvation offered to them in Christ: they have stumbled on this rock and have come to a fall (see Rom. ix. 32; xi. 11).

From all this, then, we infer that St Paul does not think that

the final hardening and obduracy of Israel had been effected by any other means than the revelation of that redemption which had been designed for and brought unto Israel.

Accordingly, the shape which the matter assumes is this: The view expressed by St Paul of the sentence of hardening passed upon Israel, so far from excluding, as it might at first sight appear to do, the preaching of the Gospel to the Jews, seems rather to imply it as its necessary condition. If, therefore, the hardening of Israel presupposes the preaching of redemption to this people; then the further question arises, whether this preaching of the Gospel must be different from that which in the Acts of the Apostles is ascribed to St Paul, or whether it can possibly be identical with it. In any attempt to settle this point, we must not overlook the circumstance, that St Paul treats the disobedience and unbelief of Israel, no less than the hardening of their hearts, as already completed and existing facts (see ix. 31, 32; x. 3, 16; xi. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 17, 25, 31). Now, was all this accomplished in the interval between the first arrival of St Paul in Antioch of Asia Minor, and the composition of his Epistle to the Romans—during his longer residence at Corinth? This is inconceivable, simply on this account, that during this period a great or essential change did indeed take place in the position of the Gentiles relatively to the salvation of Christ, but not in that of the Jews. In regard to the Jews, St Paul, as early as at his first visit to Antioch, must have entertained essentially the same conviction as that which he afterwards expressed in the Epistle written at Corinth. That past history of Israel which, throughout this section, is alluded to, cannot be any other than the time in which redemption was preached to them, in the first instance, by Jesus himself, and afterward by his Apostles, endowed with the Holy Ghost. To us, indeed, who have followed the course of Apostolical preaching both in Jerusalem and in the land of Judea, and have seen how by a rapid change the first kindly affections of the people towards the Gospel were soon transformed into utter and violent hostility, there cannot for one moment be a question, that when passing his severe judgment on Israel, it was these transactions in Jerusalem, the capital of Judea, that he chiefly had in his mind. In truth, then, it is not St Paul's preaching, but that of St Peter, which forms the previous conditions of that hardening of

Israel, which is alluded to in this section of the Epistle to the Romans, and so again we have no room left in it for any effects of the preaching of Paul himself.

However significant and important as in any case must have been the decision of the Sanhedrim and the city of Jerusalem in regard to this question, still it was the concern of every soul and of every community to determine what should be its position relatively to the preaching of the Gospel. Moreover, the sentence of the Sanhedrim and the course adopted by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, unless it had been followed by some ulterior measures, had the less claim to be considered the judgment of the whole people, the greater was the number of those dispersed abroad, and living in every region and city of the Roman Empire. And we have further to consider the fact (which in several instances has already fallen under our notice), that precisely those very members of the Israelitish nation, whose intercourse with Jerusalem was the least frequent, outran by far the natives of Palestine in shewing a special disposition for the Gospel (see ii. 5; iv. 36, 37; xi. 20). It was on this account that, from the very first, St Peter took into his consideration that portion of the nation who were dispersed and living afar off, and spoke of a call designed especially for them (see ii. 33). But to whom else was this calling to the Israelites afar off committed but to St Paul, who was expressly sent "far hence" (see xxii. 21)? And so is it in fact: it is Paul's office to carry through the different lands and people of the Roman empire, that preaching of salvation for Israel which St Peter had commenced. We have already seen that this commission is not at all inconsistent with a knowledge of the Divine counsels with regard to the Jewish people. There can, however, be no doubt that this knowledge which at the very beginning of his course must, in its general features at least, have been established in St Paul's mind, naturally brought about a peculiar modification of his labours. It was impossible that St Paul, when he stood before his people for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to them, should have been in the same frame of mind as Peter in his address to them on the day of Pentecost. Nay, in truth, it has not escaped our notice that a change took place in the tone even of St Peter's discourses. Further, we have seen that Stephen likewise took up an essentially different position

from that maintained by St Peter. What, then, are we to say of Paul, who not only had observed the hostility of Israel to the name of Jesus growing continually more and more decided, and reaching its consummation in the holy city of Jerusalem, but whose very call to be the Apostle of the Gentiles was based on the hypothesis of the rejection of his own people (see ix. 15)? The preaching of Peter had proved to the Jews a stone of stumbling; and yet Peter was able to come before them with a joyful hope that Israel would adopt Jesus as their "strong defence." St Paul, on the contrary, must antecedently have known that the baleful turn which things had so palpably and significantly taken in Jerusalem, would in all essential respects be repeated in every place of the Roman empire where a Jewish community existed. How gladly would he have been spared this part of his commission? Nevertheless, the consciousness, I will not say of the vanity of his preaching to Israel, but rather of its damnatory effects, does not, as we have already seen, exonerate him from the painful duty; and I think we can produce a distinct avowal of our Apostle's, containing an express testimony that St Paul had to undertake, and actually did undertake, the office of preaching to the Israelites precisely in the very way as the Epistle of the Romans exhibits it to us. As it seems to me, this testimony is afforded us in the passage, 2 Cor. xii. 7—9. The Apostle is there speaking of a fact of his inmost experience, which had for its object to form a counterpoise to those transcendent and unexampled revelations of God's grace, which, just before he had been extolling so highly (see ibid. vv. 1—5). Now from this connection of ideas it follows that exactly in the same way as the experience of grace is set forth as the climax of joy in the inner life of the Apostle, so in the contrasted revelation we must expect to see disclosed the ultimate source of his sorrow. Accordingly, it cannot but seem to us antecedently probable, that this declaration is connected with his solemn adjuration in the beginning of the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. For in this passage also the preceding affirmation, as well as the subject of the assertion, is of such a nature that here we must look for some explanation of the very painful and suffering feelings of the Apostle. In addition to all this is the circumstance, that in both passages the suffering is described as permanent, and,

therefore, there is no room for supposing that at one time one thing, and at another a different cause, pained him above all others.

Now, let us suppose for once (and, to judge from all that the Apostolical history has up to this date proved to us, we have the fullest right to do so), that the case did proceed exactly in the way that the Acts of the Apostles relates it; that, viz., at every spot of his missionary voyage, where it was at all practicable, St Paul commenced his preaching first of all with the Jews, and that it was not until it had been rejected by them that he turned to the Gentiles. Let us, moreover, take into our consideration what St Paul in Rom. ix. to xi. tells us of his own inward feelings relatively to Israel. What then would be the result? From an ardent love for his people and nation, the Apostle burns to bring redemption to Israel (see Acts xxii. 19, 20); he is, too, in fact, sent forth to preach to the Jews who were scattered abroad. Now, the Apostle knows that this preaching on the whole and in the gross would not and could not, in its immediate result, prove anything else than the fulfilment of God's sentence of hardening and rejection which had begun to be carried out in Jerusalem; that, therefore, in his career through the Roman empire, he had a call to bring fully to pass that curse of God which had gone forth against Israel, and of which his Apostolical proceedings against Elymas the sorcerer was at once the beginning and the token. And that St Paul actually considered in this light his travels through the different nations of the Jewish dispersion, is expressly asserted by him (1 Thess. ii. 14—17). Now, can anything be conceived of more touching and more distressing than such a call? Is not this commission, as it were, a pointed prickle or stake (σκόλοψ) (a thorn), held close to the flesh? How willingly would he shrink from it, but he dare not. His path runs through the horrible pass, and he cannot turn either to the right or to the left; and in the middle of this fearful defile the sharp stake is fixed. There is therefore no alternative; he must give his flesh to the wounding stake, and with the aid of the Spirit make his way through. It was therefore a repetition of the same pain and of the same death which was announced to him in the beginning; since he must give his flesh to the deadly prickles of the law to tear (see xxvi. 14). Of this we have seen an instance in

the case of Elymas. St Paul could not pronounce and carry into execution his sentence on the sorcerer without placing himself under the same condemnation. But how comes St Paul to call this sharp stake which continually wounded and mortified his flesh an ἄγγελος σατᾶν? I believe that he was induced to do so by the history of Balaam as one in whose conduct he probably saw the exact counterpart to his own position relatively to Israel. For it was precisely in this that the unrighteousness of the false prophet Balaam consisted, that he wished and cared for nothing else than to curse Israel in order that he might obtain the reward promised him by Balak. With this, the evident wish of his soul, did Balaam set out to go to the camp of Israel. But the longing desire of Saul the Apostle was only to bless Israel, and with this glowing love for his people and nation does he go on his way to distant lands. But as in Balaam's day the counsel of God was to bless Israel, so to curse Israel was the Divine purpose in that of St Paul. On both occasions God's counsels and desires were at issue with the wishes and desires of man. This counsel of God comes to meet Balaam in the pass as the angel of God in the shape of an adversary (לְשָׂטָן see Numb. xxii. 22—32) between the vineyards where, on the right and on the left, there was a wall (see ver. 23), and here it was enjoined on Balaam to speak of Israel not in accordance with his own heart's wishes but in obedience to God's command, and Balaam therefore is forced against his will to bless Israel. In like manner God's counsel and decree stands against St Paul as an adversary ἄγγελος σατᾶν (see Bengel in loc). True it is that here there is no wall on the right and on the left; but Paul is in his spirit bound to go straight along the road on which the adversary stands, to wit, that of denying his own will and of performing the will of God—namely, not to bless but to curse Israel. Thrice was the resistance of the angel especially grievous to Balaam; thrice did he feel the blow of this angel intolerable; but whereas Balaam in his displeasure turns outward for resource, St Paul allows his pain to attract him inwards. After the third urgent remonstrance both obtain an answer from God. Balaam outwardly resigns himself to the will of God. But though he in this way escaped the sword of the angel, he nevertheless fell by the sword of Israel (see Numb. xxxi. 8). But St Paul gives up his flesh to the sword of

the angel, and in return he receives the promise of God that the Divine strength shall even be made perfect in such weakness.

Accordingly, the result we have arrived at is this; the conviction expressed in the Epistle to the Romans of the universal rejection and hardening of Israel, is in no ways inconsistent with St Paul's operations among the Jews as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. On the contrary, we have now discovered a declaration of the Apostle himself, which authentically testifies that the fact of the Apostolic history, which has been called in question even on account of the Epistle to the Romans, really took place under the very modification which the same Epistle implies.

We ought not, however, to shrink from the avowal, that the difficulty of entering into the peculiar position and mental state of the Apostle is no ordinary one. This, however, cannot furnish any real ground of scruple against his history. For the man who fails to recognize the fact, that St Paul is set forth a spectacle to the world as the greatest of all the miraculous works of Jesus Christ, would, in any case, be little, if at all able, to understand the personal character and conduct of the Apostle. However, we shall nevertheless have great reason to be thankful if any trustworthy indications are furnished, which will enable us to form some conception of the way in which the Apostle passed through the conflict between his inmost wish and his public duty. And in fact there are several in the very same section of the Epistle to the Romans that has hitherto unveiled to to us the wide-grasping significance of the preaching of St Paul. There is perhaps only one passage in the history where the contradiction in question exists in its full unmitigated harshness, without, however, love being on that account diminished in the least degree. Jesus knew from the very first who they were that would not believe on Him and who should betray Him (see John vi. 64). He knew, therefore, not only that the Jews would reject Him, and that His manifestation among them would prove a stumbling-block to them, and still the declaration is perfectly true that with all truth and love He calls them and loves them even as the hen does her chickens, but (what says still more) even with this clear knowledge of the result which would be brought about by communion with Him, He yet stands before Judas; and still in

Judas's case in an equal degree is that true which is asserted of all, that He loved His own unto the end (see John xiii. 1). However, the instance is even unique. To Moses, on the contrary, even while he hardens Pharoah, it is given to win the hearts of Pharoah's servants and of other Egyptians (see Exod ix. 20 ; x. 7 ; xi. 3 ; xii. 38). And so also it is rendered possible for Isaiah in the midst of his work of blinding and hardening, not only to think of his wife and children as lying out of the reach of this judgment (see viii. 3—18), but also among the multitude of the people he can recognise and count a little band of disciples of the Lord (see viii. 16). This consolatory prospect was reserved also for the Apostle. He knew that although the sentence of obduracy had come upon all the people, yet an election, small indeed, comparatively, but nevertheless considerable, did not fall under this condemnation but were still under the influence of Divine grace (see Rom. xi. 1—5). Now the act of rejection was very far from reaching its consummation in the commencement of the persecution of the Church in Jerusalem and in Palestine, but it went on cotemporaneously with the preaching of the Gospel through the Roman empire. And therefore the election was so far from being closed upon the formation of the first community in the land of Judah that it too was to find its continuance in the steady preaching of the Gospel throughout Rome. Accordingly, therefore, to his own statements the Apostle Paul did not stand before the Jews entirely without hope, whenever, in the course of his travels, he fell in with them. This, indeed, he knew beforehand: that in consequence of this judicial decree, all that he could promise himself was, that his preaching would have a wholesome effect on a small number alone of his countrymen—so small indeed, as, compared with the whole nation, that they might be looked upon as none. But, at the same time, he had learned from the history of Elijah, the great importance even of such worshippers of the true God, insignificant though they might be numerically, and altogether hidden from the eye of the Prophet (see Rom. xi. 2—4), for, on every occasion throughout his Apostolical missions, he felt his situation to be such that he must be content even with gaining a few (see 1 Cor. ix. 22). Inasmuch, then, as in the records of the Acts of the Apostles, we find this hope of the Apostle invariably maintained ; if we keep this

prospect of his steadily before our minds, it will materially assist us in understanding the motives of the Apostle in addressing himself to the several synagogues of the Jews.

But this circumstance likewise brings us to another point, which is of great importance for enabling us to form a right comprehension of the history we are considering. The fact, for instance, that in every place some Jews do come to the faith in Jesus Christ, is a palpable proof that God had not as yet finally cast off his people. Of this inference St Paul adduces his own case as a striking illustration (see Rom. xi. 1, 2). Moreover, in those very passages in which he feels himself constrained to give utterance to the most unqualified condemnation of Israel, he never omits to maintain no less unreservedly, that the original call of Israel by Jehovah still remained unrepealed (see Rom. xi. 29). But if this is the case, then the original ordinance, that salvation must be offered to the Jew first of all, must retain its unalterable application. As long therefore as there existed a Jewish community that had not as yet heard the sound of the Gospel, the prerogative of having it preached to them first of all must be respected. St Paul knows but too well that his call to be an Apostle of the Gentiles could not avail to change aught in the original order of the scheme of redemption. But inasmuch nevertheless as it did somehow seem as if his vocation and labours among the Gentiles had materially modified, if it had not indeed totally reversed this order; St Paul had so firmly enjoined this order on himself, and sought to have it observed by Churches of his founding, that he often speaks of it, and insists upon it even at times when there really seems no reason for his so doing. And nowhere is this the case more frequently or more decidedly than in this very epistle to the Romans (see i. 16, ii. 9, 10, iii. 9, ix. 24, x. 12; 1 Cor. i. 29, x. 32, xii. 13; Gal. iii. 28; Col. iii. 11). If then we were previously in a condition to point out how it was possible for one, who was thoroughly convinced of the obduracy of Israel, nevertheless to preach the Gospel to the Jews, we now recognize it to be a necessity for one who, as a fundamental principle, so steadily maintained the prerogatives of the Israelities to turn first of all unto them.

If then from this point we once more cast a look back upon the mystery of the hardening of Israel's heart, we shall, by so

doing, be able to advance yet another step towards the solution of the historical question before us. If the call of Israel is not to be revoked—if, in spite of their unbelief and hardness of heart, the Jews are still to remain the people of God—what in that case are we to think of the sentence of obduracy which has been passed upon them? St Paul shows that it is not in any wise inconsistent with the position of Israel. The mission which was set the Jews, of realizing and bringing to pass in the world the blessing and salvation of God, is so immoveable and steadfast that even the unbelief of the Jews, and their hardness of heart, are intended to, and really do, bring about the redemption of all mankind. It is, for instance, through this obduracy that salvation is brought nigh unto the Gentiles. The falling away therefore of Israel has become the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentile, and the casting away of Israel the reconciling of the nations (see Rom. xi. 11, 12, 15). In this way then Israel appears as the instrument of universal salvation prepared by God from the very beginning; so that even their own deepest perversity cannot but essentially contribute to the destined end, and fulfil their original purpose. But now, if even in his unbelief—even in his obduracy—Israel ministers to and promotes the salvation of the world; it naturally follows that we may hope for an end of this state of things, when at length the accomplishing of redemption throughout the world will no longer be carried on without the concurrence, or against the will of Israel, but with and through his consent. This prospect is opened out by St Paul, even in the present context of his thoughts, as a sealed secret committed to him. And the profounder his grief must have been to witness the present condition of Israel, so sad and yet so pregnant with future results, the higher must his joy have risen when he glanced at this final consummation. In fact, the ultimate conversion of Israel, not only for their own sake, but even for the sake of its final influence on the history of nations (see Rom. xi. 15) was to him the highest and most glorious end of all development. And who will be disposed to quarrel with him, if he himself prizes his own call to be the Apostle of the Gentiles according to the measure in which it contributed to bring about this end (see Rom. xi. 13, 14)? For Moses had himself set forth as the last

and most effectual means for the softening of the hard heart of Israel, a jealousy of the Gentiles, a foolish nation, and who were no people (see Deut. xxxii. 21 ; cf. Rom. x. 19). Now, St Paul discerns the preparation of this instrument for the conversion of Israel in the fact that the Gentiles were being converted to God by faith in Jesus. The perception that the Gentiles were enjoying the rich blessing and salvation of God, while they themselves must perish of destitution—such is the hope grounded on the word of Scripture—will, he trusts, bring back the Israelites at last to the Rock on which they were founded. St Paul, therefore, is so far from regarding the conversion of the Gentiles as a final object, that he rather sees in it nothing more than a means for the conversion of Israel, and to his mind it forms the highest glory of his Apostolical office (*τὴν διακονίαν μου δοξάζω*). For he declares expressly of the Gentiles, that by means of their conversion, he is seeking to work with a converting and saving influence on his own flesh, *i.e.* on Israel.

Now, these thoughts (which the Apostle has felt himself constrained to give utterance to, precisely in that place where it was his immediate object to exhibit, in a comprehensive manner, his relation to Israel) have in two respects an important bearing on our historical problem. If the Apostle knows that the hardening and obduracy of Israel is not the last result, but that, being intended to serve as a means for effecting the conversion of the Gentiles, it must finally turn out to the greater manifestation of the mercy of God to the Israelites themselves (see xi. 32) ; there must have been in this knowledge a great encouragement for him in preaching the Gospel to the Jews. Just as Abraham had the heart to offer up his only begotten son, because he knew Him who was able to raise him up even from the dead (see Heb. xi. 19) ; so St Paul can endure to lay the word of stumbling in the way of his people, even because he knew that He who would include them all in unbelief, would, with the more abundant mercy, set them free again. But further, from the deeply-moving confession which St Paul has left us, with regard to his own position relatively to the Apostleship of the Gentiles, we see that he does not entertain the idea of looking upon his own connection with Israel as terminated by his mission to the Gentiles ; but that, on the contrary, he would have the conversion of

the people of God regarded as the supreme and ultimate object of all his labours for the kingdom of God.

Such then are the results bearing on the particular narrative of the Acts of the Apostles which is now before us, which we have drawn from St Paul's own declarations with regard to the national significance of the Jews in the Divine plan for the redemption of the world, and to his own share therein. And these results have given a totally opposite character to the position advanced by the critics above-mentioned. The very thing which they urge as an objection to the probability or possibility of the Apostle of the Gentiles directly and intentionally occupying himself with the Jews, rests upon a perfectly abstract conception of the Apostleship and history of St Paul. In truth, however, the real St Paul, such as he appears to live and move in his own Epistles, and especially in that very important section of the Epistle to the Romans on which Baur has laid so much stress, is, in all the feelings and faculties of his inmost being, so closely bound up and interwoven with the hopes and destinies of Israel, that absolutely nothing else remained for him than to preach the Gospel first of all to the Jews.

Since, then, in this point also, the account given by our book completely supports its own veracity against the suspicions of these critics, we will now resume the thread of our narrative. But not even now are we able to lay down our arms. For these critics not only deny that St Paul ever held any official intercourse with his own countrymen; but they even pretend to have discovered indubitable signs of the spuriousness of the speech to the Jews at Antioch, which is here put in the mouth of Paul. Schneckenburger remarks that the address here assigned to the Apostle is the longest of all those that are quoted as his in the Acts. There is consequently good reason for expecting that in it the characteristic features of St Paul's harangues as conceived by St Luke, would stand out in the clearest light. And in this expectation we agree the more readily with Schneckenburger, the more firmly we have been convinced that, with reference to the Jews, Paul's position was a perfectly peculiar one. Our expectation, therefore, is naturally strained to the very utmost, after the preliminary inquiry we have just concluded, to learn what tone St Paul adopts when on this missionary journey he speaks for

the first time to a Jewish assembly. But now the judgment which Schneckenburger has passed on this speech comes in the main to this, that not only does its great affinity with the speeches in the earlier part of the history of the Acts strike the eye at once, but that it is, in fact, nothing more than a mere echo of the speeches of Peter and of Stephen (see Zweck der Apostelgeschichte p. 130); and exactly in the same way as Schneckenbürger, do both Baur (see his d. Apostel Paulus p. 101) and Zeller (see theol. Jahrb. 1849, p. 580, 585) express themselves with regard to this first speech of the Apostle. And then the result which these critical observers arrive at is, that the address itself was never actually delivered, but that in all essential respects it originated with the author of the Acts. But precisely as the doubt of these critics whether St Luke correctly understood the whole of the relation to the Jews in which the Apostle Paul was involved, has contributed to a truer conception of, and to our attaining to a stronger testimony to, St Luke's exposition of that relation; so it may perhaps also turn out with our refutation of their doubts of the authenticity of the speech which, as it was the result of that relation, must also be judged of by them.

Before we enter more into a minute examination of the internal structure of this address, we would wish not to leave out of consideration a discovery of Bengel's. Bengel on vv. 18, 19, has the note: Sermonis hujus principium v. 17, 18, 19; tria habet verba græca, partim rara, partim plane singularia in sacris literis: ὕψωσεν, ἐτροφοφόρησεν, κατεκληρονόμησεν quorum primum Esaj. i. 2, et tertium Deut. i. 31, 38 occurrunt. Atque hæc duo capita Deut. i., Esaj, i., hodienum in uno sabbato leguntur, unde utrumque eo ipso sabbato, et quidem græce lectum fuisse Paulumque ad eam potissimum lectionem Mosis et prophetarum ver. 15, respexisse satis firmiter concludimus. Nam etiam judicum mentio v. 20 cum Haphthara Is. i. 26, congruit, et Judæis solemne est sermones eorumque exordia e Sabbatica lectione in Synagoga sumere (cf. Zunz; die gottesdienstliche Vorträge der Juden p. 329—333). If this acute discovery of this distinguished writer is well-grounded—as indeed can scarcely be denied—we have simply in this very circumstance a preliminary proof that the speech which is here laid before us is one which had not

its source in any imaginary situation, but really arose out of actual circumstances, such as are here related to us.

The fact that St Paul goes back to the past history of Israel, or that the speech, as Baur expresses himself, in its first part adopts a thoroughly historical course, ought in itself to be exempt from all suspicion, since under all circumstances it must be considered to be most agreeable to the nature of the case. But, moreover, all the circumstances in which the Apostle actually found himself placed at such a moment necessarily created a still more urgent necessity for an opening of this kind. The president of the synagogue, for instance, had, after the reading of the law was concluded, invited the two strangers to address some words of exhortation to the Assembly. But now, since the fact has readily been sufficiently vouched, even from other and independent testimony, that the addresses on such occasions were generally connected with the passages of Scripture which had just been read (see Zunz. ibid. p. 332. 3) it is only in compliance with the prevailing custom of the synagogue, if St Paul also draws the opening of his speech from the history of the Old Testament. And with reference to this opening, however, we would not wish to leave unnoticed the fact, that this beginning essentially differs from the discourses of St Peter, inasmuch as the latter does not commence with allusions to the past history, but rather to the present circumstances of Israel. Now, if in our minds we put together the three portions of the Old Testament which St Paul alludes to in his address, we shall see that he runs through the history of the people of Israel from its remoter beginnings to its climax under the kings (ver. 17—22).

As well the comparatively frequent citations of chronological numbers (see vv. 18, 20, 21), as the frequent and successive connective references (*μετὰ ταῦτα*, ver. 20 ; *ἕως* ver. 20, *κἀκεῖθεν*, ver. 21) lead us to conclude that it was St Paul's object to bring prominently forward the feature of gradual progression which marks the development of this history, the beginning and end of which he has very precisely marked. From the call of the patriarchs down to the setting up of David as the king who was to accomplish all the purposes of the divine will, there are not more and not less than ten steps : viz., 1st, the calling of the Patriarchs ; 2d, the exaltation of the people in the strange land of

Egypt (cf. Isai. i. 2, בָּנִים רוֹמַמְתִּי *υἱοὺς ὕψωσα* LXX.); 3d, the leading out of Egypt; 4th, the destruction of the Canaanites; 5th, the journeying in the wilderness; 6th, the taking possession of the promised land; 7th, the time of the judges; 8th, Samuel the Prophet; 9th, Saul the rejected king; 10th, David the established king. This peculiarity reminds us, as Baur has rightly seen, of the speech of Stephen. But when Baur goes on to assert that a peculiar point of view lies at the bottom of this enumeration in St Stephen's speech, which is entirely wanting to that of St Paul, he asserts that which is untrue in more than one respect. That point of view which Baur here misses, is the design of St Stephen to point out in all the past history of the people of Israel a spirit of opposition and resistance. But what could have been more unsuitable or more unamiable than for St Paul to entertain such a design while standing before the Jews of Antioch who had given him so friendly and so brotherly a reception. In this respect the situation of St Stephen was essentially different from that of St Paul. But on the other hand, if only Baur had not, as we have already seen, overlooked another leading thought which was still more essential to the discourse of St Stephen than that just indicated, he would certainly not have failed to discern a leading thought in the speech we are considering. For instance, it is, as we have already shewn, an essential object with Stephen also, to convince his hearers that a character of gradual development marked the history of the Old Testament. By such an exposition it was the purpose of Stephen palpably to demonstrate to the mind of the Jews that it could not be just at once to refuse to consider the claims of Jesus to be the Messiah, simply because He had not by His manifestation immediately realised and brought about the promised end of the history of Israel. That, however, this was the rock on which the faith of the Jews usually and generally made shipwreck, was a point which his own experience had made thoroughly clear to the mind of St Paul, and he could venture to take for granted the existence of this difficulty, without doing over much violence to the prejudices of his countrymen at Antioch. If, then, St Paul frames his discourse with a reference to this implied obstacle, and, like Stephen, calls attention to this element of gradation as forming the most prominent feature of

the whole history of the Old Testament; but at the same time the way in which he adduces the several instances of that gradation is perfectly independent and original; and this peculiarity of the discourse in question seems to me to be such as to furnish readily enough internal evidence of its own genuineness. Is it not perfectly consistent with the nature of things, that an abiding influence should have been left on the heart of St Paul by the address of the martyr Stephen, especially as by its whole tone and tenour it must have powerfully moved the heart of the Apostle (see vii. 59), as, indeed, after his conversion it probably contributed essentially to the enlightening of his understanding; and that, therefore, St Paul, in a perfectly similar situation, would spontaneously adopt, both in his thoughts and words, a similar direction to that which the great Martyr had previously taken? The independence of the Apostle, however, is sufficiently assured, not only by the fact that a particular point of view which Stephen in his address had urged with great effect, is entirely dropped by the Apostle, simply because the difference of situation required it, but even by his maintaining amid a general similarity of direction a track of his own. On account, therefore, of this resemblance (which, as it was the effect of the impression it left on his mind, was perfectly natural), to question the propriety of the speech, as thus assigned to the Apostle, would be nothing less than to make St Paul a total exception to the general laws of human development.

It is another of the peculiar facts of this speech of St Paul, that it passes at once from the history of David to that of Jesus (ver. 23); and the transition is not facilitated by any reason being advanced to account for the insufficiency of David's kingdom for the Divine purposes. How very different is the mode in which Stephen draws his deduction! Whereas the latter shews from out of the Old Testament itself, that even when the glory of its history was at its height (that is to say, about the time of the building the Temple), the gulf, which separated the actual state of things and the end of perfection, again became apparent; St Paul describes David (whom he also regards as the apex of the gloom of Israel's history), in the words of the Old Testament as the man after God's own heart, who should perform all the Divine counsels always. Now, to understand this, we must take into consideration the locality and the whole situation of the Jewish community,

before which St Paul now rose up to preach Christ. The men of Israel whom Paul was now addressing, were not in Jerusalem, but were far from the holy city and mountain, and in the midst of the territories of the heathen. Moreover, they were no doubt living in some measure in accordance with the laws and customs of their fathers; not, however, under the king of Israel, but under the emperor of Rome, to whom, with their whole people, they were subject. In this place, in this situation, there was no need for plainly speaking out and shewing that the history of Israel had not as yet arrived at its consummation. Here everything that met the eye and ear testified to the fact, that Israel had returned back to the beginning from which Abraham had started—that after sinning, Israel as a nation must follow the same course as the individual man: they had incurred the necessity of going not forwards, but backwards; not upwards, but downwards. And the more gloriously Israel's former development had once advanced step by step, and had exalted itself to its greatest height of splendour, the more painfully must the Israelites of the dispersion have felt their present condition, which everywhere exhibited a direct contrast to the olden glory of their nation. Perhaps, then, we may now follow the track pointed out above, and assume that the appointed sections of Scripture were so arranged, as that while one referred to a period of progressive development, the other contained the prophetic delineation of profound decline and fall. Perhaps, too, in a domain where stability and the absence of change is predominant, it may not be too venturous to argue from a later to an earlier time; and according to the account of Zunz (see gottesdienstliche Vortrage der Juden S. 122), to assume further, that even in the time of St Paul the lesson from Deut. i., was already appointed to accompany the Haphthora, Isaiah i., on the Sabbath of the destruction of Jerusalem, which, as is well known, took place in the first as well as in the second instance, on the same day. If, then, upon this hypothesis, we go on and take it for granted that the reading of these sacred lessons had moved the assembly to a sad and mournful frame of mind, as indeed is implied in the very title of the section appointed to be read on this Sabbath-day (פסי קתא איכה see Zunz ibid.) there would absolutely be no need for any allusion to the gulf between Israel's reality and Israel's destination, since the thought of it was already present to

their minds; and we must even ascribe it to the inexpressible tenderness and love of the Apostle for his people that he passed in silence over this fact of Sion's destitution. He prefers to take a sudden jump in his discourse to dwelling on their disappointment, and at once to appeal to the existing corruption of Israel, with a view of setting forth to them immediately, Jesus, the only deliverer and restorer of Israel (ver. 23). It did not escape Grotius and Bengel that the name of Jesus is here of importance for the Apostle's argument; and that for this reason he seeks to give prominence to its significance by the addition of the word σωτῆρ. In this most significant amplification of the name of Jesus the Deliverer, two truths are contained: first, that all the assistance hitherto afforded by Jehovah has been of no permanent advantage to His people; secondly, that He had now appeared in whom this ancient name in the history of Israel was destined to receive its full truth and realisation. It is natural that the deliverance thus asserted in the very name and designation of Jesus, and which, by the prefixing of the words τῷ Ἰσραήλ, appears to be designed expressly for Israel, should be understood by the Jews of Antioch as a deliverance from their state of dispersion and bondage, and of a restoration to the final possession and enjoyment of the promised land with its riches and blessings. And even if this were a misapprehension, still St Paul had given the occasion for it. For, by bringing before them the glory of the Old Testament, he had not only led their thoughts to the redemption thus promised by God, and by God's might to be brought to His people Israel, but he had also awakened in them a longing to return. If, then, St Paul, in order to meet this tone of mind, confirms their hope of the fulfilment of this longing, by names and expressions of the Old Testament, he does all in his power to lead on his hearers to picture to themselves such a deliverer and king in Jesus, the son of David, who, as it was purposed, should give them that portion in the world which from the beginning had been held out in prospect before them. Now, in truth it is nothing less than sheer prejudice, such as chooses to invent a Paul of its own rather than to rest contented with the real Paul as we find him in history, to maintain (as though it were a fact above all others clearly established) that this was the very last thought that the Apostle would have wished to call

forth in the minds of his hearers. As if Paul had not (without any circumlocution) applied the passage of Isaiah (lix. 20), notwithstanding that its tone is so entirely spiritual, to the second coming of Jesus for the redemption of Israel (see Rom. xi. 26).

Against such an application of the salvation that had been manifested in Jesus, to the promises and hopes given in the Old Testament to those people of Israel, St Paul has nothing to object, if only the Jews of Antioch will follow him as readily in the rest of his discourse. For he immediately gives them new intimations, and points out that, with the appropriation of this salvation, the case is altogether peculiar. He remarks that the coming of Jesus was preceded by the preaching of St John and his baptism unto repentance, and that this preparation was intended for the whole people of Israel. Now this declaration contained a reference both to the past and to the future of Israel. The baptism for repentance, and the preaching of St John unto the whole people, shows at once wherefore it was, that in spite of all the great operation of God's grace, under the Old Covenant, a full consummation had been unattainable under it. The whole nation is still unclean and under the influence of a mind utterly perverse. In his Epistle to the Romans St Paul does not lay open the abyss of sin and death in all its breadth and depth until he has first pointed to Him who had gone down into it, in order to close it for ever, however broad and deep. And, so here too, to his brethren in Antioch he does not exhibit the deep foundation of Israel's need of salvation, until he can point to the true and only Saviour, the everlasting Jesus, as already come and present among them. For this, indeed, is the instruction for the future which the baptism and preaching of St John contains. It makes clear the foundation on which deliverance rested, and for which Jesus the Saviour has been brought unto the people of Israel. If, by his baptism and preaching of repentance, St John had made it evident to the whole people that the profoundest and greatest obstacle to all redemption has its source in sin, then must Jesus appear as the very One who (in the same way that Joshua had to destroy the seven nations of Canaan before he could divide the land) was first of all to remove that enemy from within Israel, in order thereupon to allow the people to enter upon its eternal inheritance. For that all that John performed, either in word or deed, was to

be regarded as nothing more than a sign and a pointing to Him who was to come as the judge and restorer, is remarked by St Paul in the Baptist's own words (ver. 25).

The remark of Schneckenburger and of Baur is no doubt perfectly correct, that Peter, in his discourse to Cornelius and his friends, likewise makes mention of St John and his baptism as well as of his preaching (see x. 37). But still it is a perfectly unjustifiable proceeding to seek to build thereon a suspicion of the genuineness of the address which has been transmitted to us. The brief allusion to St John in the speech of St Peter was, as we saw, intended to serve as a counterpoise to that preference of the Jews which is implied in the natural connection between Jesus and the Jewish nation. It was addressed to a Gentile audience. But, however appropriate and original the mention of the Baptist in the speech of St Peter may have been, the more detailed remarks of St Paul upon the forerunner of Jesus are no less original and equally pertinent to the whole of his discourse. And precisely in the same degree that the latter discourse dwells the longer on the subject of the Baptist, is this portion of it more necessary for the further progress of the thought. Nay, what the Apostle says of the baptism and person of St John contains the only express explanation he gives of the kind and nature of this salvation, which (he wished it to be understood) was connected with the name and designation of Jesus. So that when, in ver. 26, he proceeds with the expression ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης, this reference becomes intelligible only from what he had asserted with respect to John the Baptist. If, then, instead of allowing themselves to be deceived by appearances, people had but taken the trouble of examining into the several grounds for the mention of St John in these two passages; then, instead of casting suspicion and blame upon the Acts of the Apostles, it would have been found to deserve from them the very opposite treatment.

It was very wisely done of the Apostle to stop at this point in his historical exposition, and forthwith to point out the relation of Jesus to those present in the most heart-winning terms (ver. 26). For the further exposition of what history had to report would only have immediately laid bare the conflict between Jesus and the Jews of Palestine, and thereby perhaps have unneces-

sarily prejudiced his Antiochian auditors antecedently against the Gospel which he preached to them. It was St Paul's desire at any rate to awaken an impression that for them the matter still lay perfectly open and undecided. Consequently, as soon as he has spoken of the appearance of Jesus the Saviour, and of the nature of the salvation to be expected from Him; he at once places himself before the Jews of Antioch as the bearer and dispenser of those tidings of salvation, and requires nothing more of them than that they would look upon it and adopt it as intended only for themselves. Now, when he feels that he has arrived at the decisive point of his discourse, he addresses them with two different but significant appellations. He calls them first of all "brethren," and then "children of the stock of Abraham." By the first designation he intimates his own personal relationship to his hearers, and we have already seen how strong a feeling of the tie of kindred to the Jews, still lived in St Paul's breast. With this address, therefore, he does but satisfy the longings of his own heart. With the other address, St Paul evidently designed to allude to the position which gave his hearers full and indisputable title to the salvation that had been revealed. If, for instance, they are descendants of Abraham, they are connected in the direct line with the first beginnings of the history of redemption (see ver. 17). As they form the natural close of the line which began with Abraham and reached its close in the person of Jesus, so, too, must the salvation which had taken its beginning with God's election of their fathers, and had arrived at its consummation in the person of Jesus, find its true aim in those who were then present. But at the same time this address —thus full of promise—involves also a warning to all, to lay to heart the instruction conveyed by the history of salvation in the Old Testament, which begun with their fathers, and which St Paul had laid before them. He admonishes them that the salvation of God attains to its consummation, not according to the measure of human impatience and short-sightedness, but according to God's wisdom, which measures out years and times, and heights and depths. We see, therefore, that St Paul not only allows himself to follow the course which, from his own explanations, we could not but expect him to do in his present position, but that he takes up that very position before the Jews of

Antioch, which, judging from his written statements to the Roman Church concerning the Jews, and his own Apostolical office, it appeared antecedently probable that he would.

After that St Paul had thus, with great caution, brought the preaching of Jesus unto the "afar off," of the Jews in Antioch, as he would have done had they been inhabitants of Galilee at the time when Jesus there went in and out among them, he then passes on to sketch to them the further history of Jesus, and especially His end. For it is not merely because this conflict between Jesus and His people in the Jewish land would not have remained unknown to them, that St Paul feels himself constrained to proceed further with his account; but principally because it is in the subsequent history of Jesus that His saving power and signification first of all attain to a full consummation and manifestation. These further statements St Paul joins on to the foregoing by means of a γὰρ (ver. 27). Since he wishes to intimate that the mode in which the message of Jesus had arrived at Antioch—so informal when looked at externally—had its source in the fact that the external centre of the whole Israelitish polity, and the supreme authority in all internal matters of the Jewish people, the Council in Jerusalem, had proved unfriendly towards Jesus the Saviour; and had even given him up into the hands of the Gentiles to suffer an ignominious death. St Paul, however, fully feels how great is the demand which, with this explanation, he is making on his hearers. Probably, indeed, he, the unknown stranger, is the very first who had ever mentioned to the Jewish community the name and works of Jesus. And now he, after telling them that this same Jesus had, by the supreme Council and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, been condemned to death, nevertheless demands of them to believe in this Saviour, who had thus been crucified. Consequently, he strives to remove the unfavourable impression which the conduct of the people and authorities of Jerusalem must have necessarily left on the minds of the Jews of Antioch, by adducing a still higher and holier authority. St Paul, for instance, maintains that the Jews in Jerusalem had, by their deadly hostility, accomplished nothing more than the fulfilment of the Scriptures which had spoken of Him. Paul sets forth at length the criminal ignorance they had been guilty of, for they who sat in judgment on Him (κρίναντες)

ver. 27), had nevertheless failed to see that the very Scriptures which were read every Sabbath, and consequently were universally known, pointed Him out as the promised Messiah. And St Paul further affirms, that the supreme authorities of the Jews, acting in such ignorance as to put in practice against Jesus all the influence their office gave them, and to persecute Him even unto death, were themselves involved in the most utter inconsistency, so that what they did was the direct contrary to what they intended. For, says St Paul, inasmuch as they gave up the Saviour to Pilate for punishment, and after His death proceeded to make his tomb sure, in the hope of being able to prove and to expose Him as a false prophet; by these very acts they had fulfilled the prophecies, and made it manifest, that Jesus was the Christ, since He had died according to the Scriptures, and, as he writes to the Corinthians, had also risen according to them (see 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4). St Paul, therefore, shows that these very functionaries, by setting up their authority against Jesus, had themselves destroyed it; and had set up and established in the light of day a higher and holier authority, namely, the authority of the Sacred Scriptures. It is, however, perfectly conceivable, that the Apostle should not stop here, and should not believe that he had done full justice to the subject, until he had placed in contrast with this external fact of the rejection of Jesus another fact no less external and palpable, the consideration of which would remove from the former all its apparent difficulties. This fact is the resurrection of Christ. And it was even because St Paul had in thought been long before looking forward to this fact of the resurrection, that he mentioned the burial of Jesus in a somewhat startling way. For it is not without good reason that it has struck several commentators as singular, that St Paul should have ascribed the taking of the body of Jesus down from the cross, and the burying in the grave, to the same agents as had delivered Him up to Pilate (ver. 29). The suggestion of Grotius that we should take *καθελόντες* in the sense of *οἱ καθελόντες*, has been justly rejected by Meyer as untenable. Meyer's own solution of the difficulty, however, comes ultimately to the same as what Grotius really meant; for he argues that *καθελόντες* applies to Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, who were of the number of the *ἄρχοντες*. But assuredly this will never consist with the line of thought followed by the

Apostle. In all that St Paul has hitherto said of these authorities he has throughout imputed to them a feeling of deadly hostility. How then could he ever, in the same sentence, ascribe to these rulers the honour of having shown to Jesus such a mark of love and respect, which in any case, too, would have been true only of one or two members of the Sanhedrim, who, throughout this whole business, had been at issue with their colleagues (see Luke xxiii. 51 ; John xix. 38, 39). In my opinion the mention in this passage of the burial of Christ is of no further import than as it is the consequence of the putting to death. It is in this light that the sepulchre of Christ is represented in Matt. xxvii. 62—66. No doubt it was a loving hand that took down Jesus from the cross, and laid Him in the newly-hewn sepulchre which was in the garden of Joseph. But most assuredly we cannot discern any trace of this work of love when the high priests obtain an order from Pilate for the attendance of a body of soldiers, and when, with these soldiers, they force their way into this garden of Joseph, and seal the stone with their own seal, in order that by means of the seal and the watch they may assure themselves against any tampering with the sepulchre of Jesus (ἠσφαλίσαντο ver. 66), in the hope of tearing from that deceiver his last mask (ἐκεῖνος ὁ πλάνος ver. 63). Here, therefore, the entombment of Jesus, and with it also, as its necessary concomitant, the taking down from the cross, appears to be the final act by which his enemies crowned their violence against Him. Now, since it is precisely in this way that St Paul presents this circumstance to us, he has this advantage, that by this means he is able to allow the significance of His resurrection to shine forth the more majestically. For the more completely the tomb of Christ appears to be in the possession and the power of His enemies, the more eminently glorious is that disappointment of His enemies by the quickening of God which was manifested even at His sepulchre.

It becomes evident that the resurrection is to be regarded as the Divine seal on the whole of the life that had preceded it. Wherever, therefore, any doubt or scruple may have arisen from the previous circumstances against the personal history of Jesus as the Redeemer, it must retire before the bright effulgence of the breaking of this Divine day. This is the reason why St Paul dwells solely on this single fact in the history of Jesus.

First of all he refers his hearers to the testimony which existed for this fact (ver. 31). The witnesses to it are men who had previously lived in familiar and intimate intercourse with Jesus; they had gone up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem. It was impossible, therefore, that they could be deceived as to the identity of His person. Further, He had not merely appeared to them, and then vanished away for ever, but He had shown Himself to them for many days. And, lastly, neither do these men, nor their statements, remain hidden; but, says St Paul, they still stand before the world as public witnesses to the people of the reality of this fact; and from this, their own confident undoubting conviction may at least be inferred. After that St Paul has urged as closely as possible the evidence for the resurrection on the Jews of Antioch; he proceeds to shew from the Scripture, the great importance of this fact of the Resurrection. At his first mention of Jesus, St Paul had appealed to the promises of Scripture which had been fulfilled in Him (ver. 23). Now, the resurrection being brought so exclusively forward in the history of Jesus, it became incumbent on him to demonstrate from the same Scriptural source its distinctive importance. This is what St Paul goes on to do, when he again reminds them of the promises made to the fathers (ver. 32); and in that he designates his hearers as children of these fathers (ver. 33), he again ascribes to them the full indisputable right to the salvation thus accomplished, and thereby seeks once more to do away with any disturbing effect that the events in Judea may have exercised on their minds.

After this introduction, St Paul appeals first of all to the first—or, according to our arrangement, the second—Psalm, and in the declaration, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee," he sees a promise which in the resurrection of Jesus had attained to its Divine fulfilment (ver. 33). For that the words ἀναστήσας Ἰησοῦν are to be understood not of the incarnation of Jesus, but of His resurrection, we may, I think, after Meyer's remarks, take for granted. But how can the re-awakening be understood as a begetting? If we call to mind how in the portion of his address, which is taken from the Old Testament, St Paul had dwelt on the might and glory of Israel in its imperial grandeur; and when we add thereto the contrast, silently made, indeed, but still running through the whole of the present and the actual, which

was common both to the speaker and his hearers—the loudly speaking contrast that all this power and majesty had sunk into dust and ashes; this reflection will be calculated to impress every one with the absolute nothingness of the things of this life. For every Israelite unquestionably must have been conscious that the line from Abraham to David marks out the period of his national history within which the best and the most glorious events of all times had taken place. But in presence of such a conviction of the nullity of this life and its affairs, what can be the meaning of a Divine begetting, a beginning of life imparted of God? Can it be a birth into this misery—into this system of nought? No, indeed; a beginning of life that should be worthy of such a designation, must be set free from the bonds of this annihilation; and if it is to be a human and an earthly existence, (as we may presume from all else that this Psalm tells us about this life), it must have trodden under its feet that power of death, which rules over the history of man on earth, in order thenceforth to be no more shackled and impeded by it. Is not this even the resurrection of Him who had given himself up to this whole condition of perishable decay, and as St Paul himself informs his hearers, had condescended even to death and the grave, in order afterwards by the might of the Spirit once more to be created unto earthly life (see 1 Pet. iii. 19). Not only does it admit of being shewn that generally the Jews held this idea of the Resurrection (see J. D. Michaelis kritisches Collegium über die drei wichtigsten Psalmen von Christo S. 542), but also that St Paul is particularly fond of this mode of view and expression. If St Paul calls Christ the πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν (Col. i. 18), he expressly intimates that by that beginning of life, on account of which he speaks of Christ as "born," and, indeed, as "first-born," he means the resurrection from the dead. And if we compare the passage, Rom. viii. 29, (where he designates Christ by this very same term), with Cor. xv. 49, we shall be convinced that he is here also moving in the same class of ideas. Lastly, see Rom. i. 4 where St Paul makes the definite declaration (ὁρισθέντος), the clear pointing out of the Son of God, to begin with the raising again from the dead. Now, in addition to all this, we are able to point out in the life of St Paul himself the origin of this mode of conception and speaking. For instance, St Paul

calls that state which had preceded his new birth, a death (see Rom. vii. 9—11; Gal. ii. 19); and we have seen that our narrative (ix. 8, 9) furnishes the outward occasion for his so doing. We also see from it that it is peculiar to St Paul to look upon the new birth as a begetting from death unto life. What St Paul means to assert is therefore this: These words of the Psalm about Divine sonship and Divine begetting contain something so great that it cannot possibly be applied to this life, entangled as it is in the bonds of death and nullity. On the other hand, the quickening of Jesus from death at once shews what it was that was intended to be conveyed by these grand words. In so far as these words pointed beyond every thing that was present in the Old Testament, it was a promise. In so far as in the actual present a fact lies before us, which accurately answers to those words, we have in them the fulfilment of the Divine promise.

Somewhat differently does the case stand with the other passage which St Paul seeks to make available. For here he already takes for granted that, on the basis of his previous demonstration, the Messianic dignity of Jesus is well established. And now, from a prophetic passage, relative to the future condition of the kingdom of Israel, he seeks to draw an inference with respect to the life of its future king. From the steadfastness and certainty of the mercies solemnly promised to David (see Isai. lv. 3 cf. Hofmann Weiss. u. Erfull. 2. 173), St Paul derives the idea that He who is designed to be the eternal mediator of all gifts and grace for Israel, cannot again submit to a foreign hostile power, such as death, since this certainty can be founded on nothing but the eternally indissoluble life of the King. Since, moreover, according to the previous exposition, it must be self-evident that one like Jesus, who, according to the Scriptures, had undergone death and all its hostile powers, would not be quickened again, in order, like the widow's son, to die a second time: for, as St Paul writes to the Romans, we know that Christ, having risen from the dead, dieth no more; death has no more dominion over him (Rom. vii. 9); the order of the proof, how the words of Scripture and the facts of redemption here coincide, admits of being easily converted.

St Paul appears to feel that he is making rather too large a demand on his hearers, when he seems to require that they

should recognize the passage of Isaiah as alluding to the Resurrection and everlasting life of Jesus. On this account he goes on to add another passage in which there is contained a declaration concerning the King of Israel, which most obviously had found its fulfilment in Jesus, and, in truth, in Him exclusively. That the passage in Isaiah did allude to the Resurrection, rests on the assumption, that the sacred promises to David can not be sure and stedfast, unless the Mediator of them, who evidently can be none other than the King of Israel, enjoys an eternal life. Now, since this is expressly asserted in a Psalm (viz. the 16th), therefore St Paul can very appropriately introduce by means of διὸ the passage of this Psalm which refers thereto (ver. 35). The Apostle is aware that this psalm is one of David's, and he takes it for granted that the most obvious course is to refer it to David. On this account he feels it to be necessary to give prominence to the fact that the passage adduced asserts a something which cannot be found in David's history. It is true, also, that he cannot adduce any further proof to his hearers that it had had its fulfilment in the history of Jesus; he can, however, affirm it as of his own knowledge—and if they had received his testimony to the fact of the Resurrection, he might reckon on a favourable hearing for his further statements. But how could the fact, that Jesus having been raised by God, had not seen corruption, involve the further truth that He should never again return to corruption? If Jesus had not seen corruption, this is indeed a proof that He has so suffered death as not to be brought into subjection to it, but that He had triumphed over death; for, since corruption is the further continuance of the power of death, incorruptibility, consequently, can only follow where there has been a triumph over death (cf. Theol. Commentar zum. A. T. 1. 2. 566). Incorruption, therefore, is a practical proof that the death of Jesus was not a victory of, but a victory over death. But now, if death had only exercised its power over Jesus in order forthwith to lose it, how could he ever again tread the path of death?

But why should St Paul deem it to be necessary to give prominence to the fact, that David, after having in his day served the counsels of God, had fallen asleep (ver. 36). This remark carries us back to the close of the Old Testament portion

of his address (ver. 22). David, so far as it was possible for him, had actually fulfilled all the will and counsel of God, and not until then had he been laid unto his fathers. It is therefore yet a second time emphatically repeated, that the highest perfection that is attainable in this life, lies before us in the history of David. But David, the king of Israel, is fallen asleep, and still Israel needs a guardian and a keeper who neither slumbers nor sleeps (see Ps. cxxi. 4). Therefore not David, but His Son and seed, Jesus, is the true King of Israel (ver. 23). The latter has passed through death in order to deprive death for ever of its power, and therewith to render firm and imperishable for ever to Israel (ὑμῖν (ver. 35) the holy promises to David. And now it became perfectly plain why St Paul, at the very beginning of the second half of his speech, could designate Jesus as the Saviour of Israel.

In the third and last portion St Paul draws from his twofold historical exposition the consequence which was therein contained, and which concerned those present. When in this passage he again renews the hearty address ὦ ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, he is anxious to direct their attention to a point which he sets forth as the sum of his whole address. From the history of the Old Testament, he had pointed out to them the gradational course of the development of salvation. If therefore the men of Antioch were willing to adopt the right position relatively to the proffered salvation, they must fit themselves into the gradual course of the history of redemption, and the greater the salvation before them is, the more fundamentally and the more profoundly incumbent is it on them in accordance therewith to shape and develop themselves gradually. From the beginning of the history of Jesus, St Paul has further shown that the work of redemption is directed first and foremost to the removal of impurity and perverse sentiments. Accordingly we shall find it perfectly consistent if, in the practical inference which St Paul draws finally by an οὖν, he announces to his hearers that forgiveness of sins is preached to them by this person, namely, Jesus (ver. 38). By these words he admonishes every one in the inmost depths of his being, and indicates the point at which, according to the history of redemption, both in prophecy and in fulfilment, salvation must begin, if it, through its temporal development, is to reach unto eternity. To

this brief affirmation St Paul appends an explanation, wherein his own personal history and character are reflected in the most undeniable manner. An important proof of Pauline phraseology appears to be here furnished simply by the fact that, in this explanation, an expression twice occurs which is not merely almost exclusively peculiar to the diction of this Apostle, but must be regarded as the very centre of his whole system of teaching. And that is the term δικαιοῦσθαι which here appears to be employed in its positive as well as its negative application (vv. 38, 39). And in truth the two applications of this term, which are here prominently urged, are the same as that in which we find it employed in the Pauline epistles. In the same way as here (Gal. iii. 11, ii. 21, v. 4, and Rom iii. 20) justification is denied to be possible within the sphere of the law, while, on the other, its reality in the fellowship with Christ is here asserted in the same sense as in Rom. iii. 26; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Gal. ii. 17. For if Meyer thinks he has discovered here a difference from St Paul's doctrine on justification, as it is elsewhere delivered, he is met not only by Neander (see Geschichte d. Leitung, &c., i. 145) but even by Schneckenburger, with the correct remark: "So long as another construction is possible we are not justified in assuming that St Luke ever intended to put into the mouth of St Paul an expression which is in perfect contradiction to all that we otherwise know of the Apostle's doctrine (see Zweck d. Apostel-Geschichte S. 131). We, however, can go a step further, and can help the statement of the Acts by shewing how this, so perfectly characteristic expression, arose in both its aspects on the mind of St Paul. So long, for instance, as St Paul went about in his own blindness, he looked upon himself as a man, who, according to the law, was blameless; and since it was his highest aim to maintain the majesty of the law, he very properly placed his justification in the law (κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ ἄμεμπτος γενόμενος, Phil. iii. 6). When, however, after having been blinded by the light of Christ, he began to acquire spiritual discernment, the law shewed him in every direction his own unrighteousness. He found in the law nothing but condemnation and death. This deadly contact with the law made him still more certain and more undoubting still, that there could be no way to life and salvation but through justification. For this

requirement of righteousness by the law, even by its mortal effects, proved itself to be a Divine power which there was no escaping. But now since it was not righteousness, but unrighteousness that he discovered within his inmost being, he must soon have arrived at a consciousness that the translation into the condition of righteousness, that is δικαιοῦσθαι, was the profoundest and most indispensable want of his nature. Where, then, is the power that can translate him into this state? Accordingly in Acts xxii. 14, Jesus, who had appeared to Him, is described as the Just One (ὁ δίκαιος). By this term, too, Stephen also had spoken of him at the close of his discourse (see vii. 52). At that time, indeed, St Paul held himself to be righteous, but Jesus to be unrighteous. Now, however, since his fancied righteousness has, to his mind, been proved to be the direct opposite; so likewise the unrighteousness of Jesus must be turned into righteousness, in such sort, that while he feels his own unrighteousness to be grounded, not in this or that peculiarity, but in the fleshly nature absolutely (see Rom. vii. 14), he sees righteousness only in Jesus the Lord of Heaven. All else are, he knows, in like measure with himself, partakers of unrighteousness, and therefore know and see Him as the Just One, according as God (Acts xxii. 14) had granted to them to know and to see Him. But now, who is it that builds for him the bridge over the gulf that separates him, the unrighteous one, from that Just One? Jesus had said unto him: "I am He whom thou persecutest." From these words St Paul must discern that He is not only in heaven but also on earth, even in those who confess His name. He learns, therefore, that the Just One from Heaven not only has a fellowship with men on earth, but even gives Himself to them to be their own, and imparts Himself unto them. But perhaps these are some special men? Now, as far as St Paul in those hours of conflict must have felt himself to be different from these confessors of Jesus, so by means of the experiences which had been permitted unto him, he had learned that they stood with him on the same ground of nature and of the flesh, and had originally been quite as far from Jesus as he at that moment found himself. Accordingly, Jesus had communicated himself to *those* and given Himself to *those* as their own, who, according to the properties of their fleshly nature,

could not have been anything else than unrighteous. But this thought, however, admits not of being otherwise worked out than by supposing that Jesus had removed the wall of separation, by allowing His righteousness to work as the power which can translate the unrighteous into a state of righteousness, and that He, after removing this obstacle, had entered into personal living communion with them. On the side of the unrighteous nothing can be required for this transformation, but that mental state which willingly allows such operations of the righteousness of Christ upon its own unrighteous condition to proceed. But now this frame of man's mind, which allows the Divine operation to go on, and receives it, is called, even from Abraham's time, faith. Thus, then, from the experience which St Paul himself had undergone, and which is reported to us in the book we are discussing, that proposition is brought out, which, in this his first address, he expresses in the words ἐν τούτῳ πὰς ὁ πιστεύων δικαιοῦται.

Although, as Neander so correctly observes, St Paul has in this speech employed to the utmost all that peculiar wisdom and skill in winning the minds of men which he possessed in so eminent a degree, he yet felt that it was no ordinary difficulty to gain the assent of the Jews to the Gospel of Jesus. In order therefore to give impressiveness to the closing warning of his address, he reminds his hearers of the great peril to which they were exposed, which, however, with prudent caution he does not set forth in his own words, but in those of a prophet (ver. 41). In all this we can distinctly trace the Apostle Paul. The words with which he thus threatens his hearers are taken from the Prophet Habakkuk. And in fact they occur in connection with a passage of which we know that to the Apostle's mind it possessed an extraordinary importance. The passage in question is Habakkuk ii. 4—a passage in which the Apostle, judging from Rom. i. 17, and Gal. iii. 11, found the most distinct expression of his whole doctrine, just as he has here explained it to the Jews of Antioch. In this passage the Prophet declares that the just shall, by his faith, be withdrawn from the condemnation and shall live, while, on the other hand the soul in which pride has set up its false heights is manifestly threatened (see Delitsch zu Hab. S. 45).

How natural must it have been, supposing the Apostle wished

to point out to his hearers the possibility of this danger, for him to describe it in the words of that Prophet, in whose writings the powerful confirmation of his own experience of that only redemption (which he had just been commending in presence of the Jews of Antioch) was set forth, together with an intimation of the great danger which attended on a high-minded contempt (*καταφρόνηται*).

Thus by carefully following the course and the principal turning points of the speech before us, we have arrived at a conviction that we have here an address which not only in general perfectly answers the expectation which we could not but form of a speech of St Paul's, but in whose most important elements we have also pointed out a decidedly Pauline stamp. Now are we to allow this conviction to be disturbed, if not totally removed from our minds, by a mere declaration of certain critics that in some points the speech too strongly reminds them of the earlier speeches recorded in the Acts? It has already been shown that the resemblance which these critics have pointed out in the first and in the beginning of the second part of this discourse to certain passages of the addresses of Stephen and St John, do not in the least detract from its claims to originality. We hope too to be able to prove the same with regard to other pretended plagiarisms. St Paul, for instance, in ver. 27, says, that what the rulers had done so hostilely against Jesus was done in ignorance. Now, offence has been taken at this, in the first place, because St Peter also has said the same (see iii. 17), and secondly, because, as it is urged, such a statement is in any case too mild for St Paul's position relatively to the Jews (see Schneckenburger ibid S. 130, 132). But now, with regard to the first objection, we are in a position to show that this exculpatory view of the malice of the Jews towards the Saviour is to be traced back, not to St Peter, but as St Luke himself informs us, to the Lord himself (see Luke xxiii. 34). And further—such is the abundance of our proofs—we have from St Paul's own hand a statement, in which, employing this very expression *οἱ ἄρχοντες*, he advances precisely the same view of the fact. The passage in question is 1 Cor. ii. 8. Now, in all essential respects the second objection also has already received its answer in the reply to the first—for the argument was that St Paul, considering his opposition to the Jews, could not, in any case, have ever

adopted so exculpatory a view. But now, when on this ground Schneckenburger maintains that St Paul, when he stood before the Jews of Antioch, must necessarily have exhibited as strong hostility towards them as St Stephen and St Peter, are described as manifesting towards those in Jerusalem (see ii. 22, 37—40; ch. vii.), this is a style of criticism which is soon caught in its own snare. For if, as these critics assume, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles composed the speech we are examining after the model of the speeches previously reported, in that case he would most assuredly have put into the mouth of this the sternest of the Apostolical opponents of the Jews those sterner accusations of his countrymen. But since St Luke does report to us the speech such as it was actually delivered by St Paul in the synagogue of Antioch, it is no wonder if the Apostle does not speak as if he were in Jerusalem, and standing, where St Peter once stood, in the presence of those who, not more than seven Sabbaths before, had called for the crucifixion of Jesus—or like Stephen, before those who had already twice made an attack upon the Apostles of Jesus! Moreover, the whole of this supposition of a one-sided unmitigated sternness on the part of St Paul towards the Jews rests absolutely on no ground at all, as we have already clearly established from the authentic declarations of the Apostle himself; and in the present speech we meet with precisely that very tenderness and that wish to spare, coupled with Apostolical earnestness which, judging from the Apostle's own declaration with regard to his feelings towards Israel, we ought to expect.

But the critics have even taken offence at the circumstance that St Paul, like St Peter (ii. 23; iii. 18; iv. 28), lays great stress upon the fact that, by means of the malice of the Jews in Jerusalem, the counsels and Scriptures of God with regard to Jesus had attained to their accomplishment (see Schneckenburger ibid S. 130). But, first of all, it ought to have been asked whether this view and inference is not so strongly grounded in the very nature of the matter itself, that the two Apostles might very consistently have concurred therein quite independently of each other? And is it not simply enough, in this regard, to point to the circumstance that St Paul, without any further external occasion, even in presence of a community of Gentile Christians, felt him-

self constrained to lay great weight on this agreement of the death of Christ with the Scriptures. This he does in 1 Cor. xv. 3. How much more immediately, however, would this view suggest itself,—how much more necessary was such a declaration in the presence of a Jewish assembly which then for the first time heard the name of Jesus? And here, too, we can go a step further. How obvious is it that this forcible appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures relatively to the sufferings of the Lord belongs neither to Peter nor to Paul, but to Christ. The disciples themselves stood once in danger of erring with regard to Jesus when such great and heavy sufferings were about to be laid upon Him by the hands of the highest authorities in their nation. This danger Jesus met by a constantly renewed and earnest appeal to the Sacred Scriptures (see Luke xviii. 31; Matt. xxvi. 24, 31—54; John xvii. 12; Luke xxiv. 26, 27, 32, 44—47). Now since the Jews, who heard at the same time of salvation through Christ and of His condemnation by the High Counsel at Jerusalem, are in exactly the same situation, could the Apostle have adopted any other remedy for this trial than that which their Lord and Master had previously employed? But there is yet another ground on which, far more than on any other, the speech of St Paul has been suspected by critics; and that is, that in his preaching of Jesus he gives prominence to His resurrection and not to His death; and so seeks to found the forgiveness of sins not so much on the death—as, however, St Paul elsewhere does—as rather on the Resurrection (see Schneckenburger S. 130, Baur: der Apostel Paulus. S. 102, 103). In this point the carelessness of Exegesis has been the stimulus of an erring criticism. For Olshausen, in his commentary, thus remarks on the close of this speech: "St Paul, as it seems, here indeed connects the ἄφεσις ἁμαρτίων immediately with the Resurrection, although in his epistles he looks upon the death of Christ as the source of the forgiveness of sins." And he thus attempts to explain this circumstance: "The death of Christ was a matter calculated to give offence; it therefore must be allowed to fall into the back-ground; the Resurtion, on the contrary, possessed a peculiar demonstrative force; and on this account St Paul's discourse was pre-eminently about it." Accordingly, we cannot here accuse criticism of any over-proneness to suspicion, if it raises its protest against such a

Paul. But in the course of our enquiries, we arrived at this result, that the prominence given to the Resurrection of Jesus forms the concluding and finishing climax of the two didactic portions of the Apostle's discourse, which exhibit to us a perfectly transparent Pauline originality; and next, with regard to the hortatory portion, we discerned that it could not be properly understood, and conceived of as an inference and conclusion, except under the supposition of St Paul's own experience and personality. Accordingly, of all the pretended borrowings and peculiarities which are said to be so unlike St Paul, nothing remains but the use of the 16th Psalm, in which St Peter and St Paul do not merely coincide, but also both alike attempt to show that the allusion in this Psalm is not to David (see ii. 29, 30; xiii. 36, 37). But now, when another equally appropriate passage from the Old Testament in proof of the rising again of the King of Israel did not so readily present itself as that of the 16th Psalm, we shall surely be willing to allow St Paul to make use of the latter, even though St Peter, at a still earlier date, had referred it to Him in a similar sense; and the more so as it has been shown that the remark which denies its reference to David closely connects the end of the first with the beginning of the second, and therewith very appropriately brings to an end the whole development of this teaching from history.

The impression which St Paul's first address made upon the assembly was extremely favourable. Not only are Paul and Barnabas invited to explain themselves further on this matter on the next Sabbath, but a multitude of Jews and proselytes follow them, and show a decided disposition for the Gospel which they had just heard of, so that St Paul and Barnabas felt nothing more to be necessary than to exhort them to continue in the grace of God (ver. 43). But that on the following Sabbath, the Gentiles especially evinced a strong desire to hear the Word of God, has its ground in the peculiarity of St Paul's preaching, such as he had set it forth in his speech on the previous occasion. Since, for instance, St Paul extolled, before the Jewish assembly, the forgiveness of sins by Christ as the first and chiefest good, he implied, without further attempt to prove it, that as regarded the salvation by Christ, the Jews were, in no wise, better off than the Gentiles. When, then, he goes on further, and makes justifica-

tion to be dependant on faith alone, and sets up no other condition than (πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων δικαιοῦται ver. 39) he gives them to understand that the Gentiles were as much within reach of salvation as the Jews themselves. Since now this peculiar feature of St Paul's preaching has its source even in his own experience, which on the one hand had awakened in him a discernment of the universal corruption of human nature, and on the other, had convinced him that the only qualification for salvation is the total renunciation of all merit of one's own, and a simple readiness to receive the Divine; this feature must have made itself felt in the interval, and have exercised an attractive energy on the Gentiles. But it was precisely this confluence of the Gentiles to hear the word that hurried on, the crisis with the Jews. The decided inclination thus evinced by the heathens for the word preached, is to them the confirmation of the impression which they, too, without doubt had received—that, viz., in competition with the salvation offered by St Paul, the Divine prerogatives of Israel would not be held in any regard. Therefore, in the sight of such a remarkable interest for the word of salvation on the part of the Gentiles, the moment must have come for all the Jews to decide which was the more highly to be prized—forgiveness of sins, and justification before God, or their share in the pre-eminent external position of Israel. And it became manifest that only a very small number had a sufficiently lively sense of that inmost want to whose satisfaction St Paul had pointed, as to leave for the time all other questions about it undecided. The Jews, we are told, were filled with envy, and began to contradict and blaspheme (ver. 45). We here witness in the distinctest manner possible a repetition of a similar total change to that which we have already observed in Jerusalem (see vi. 12); only that in the present case, owing, on the one hand, to the personal character of St Paul, and on the other, to the neighbourhood of the Gentiles its course was still more rapid. The turn with which, after this, decision, the Apostles took leave of the Jews, in order to go to the Gentiles, is to our minds, judging from all that has gone before, a natural consequence; only we must not the while overlook the peculiar plea with which they justified themselves before the Jews for so doing. While, for instance, they apply to themselves the prophetic declarations of Isaiah concerning the

servant of the Lord (xlix. 6), they plunge yet another dagger into the heart of the unbelieving Jews in order to see whether now at last they cannot be made sensible of their true position. For in these words of the Prophet they gave them to understand that they were by no means disposed either to disregard or to depreciate the high blessings and gifts which God had committed to his people. For, in truth, these words imply nothing less than the permanent position of Israel as contrasted with the Gentiles; but how?—in such wise that the two Apostles who carry the word of God to the Gentiles represent the true Israel, the righteous servants of Jehovah, whilst the Jews, on the other hand, who had been seized with jealousy and horror because the Gentiles had sought after the light of God, were to be looked upon as fallen from the true destination of the people, and as the dead and soulless corpse of Israel.

As then the true sense of the Gospel first of all dawns upon the Jews in consequence of the position which the Gentiles adopt relatively to it, so conversely it is by the adverse decision of the Jews that the truth is first fully brought home to the Gentiles. As in the case of the Jews, the impression it first made upon them finally takes the form of bitterness and hostility; so in the case of the heathen it is ultimately transmuted into joy and gladness (ver. 48). In this trait we see again the relation of the world to the Gospel, such as it was then formed and still subsists. In a short but pregnant sentence (which, however, is not usually understood in its true sense), St Luke thus describes the result of these labours of Paul and Barnabas "And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed" (ver. 48). In these words Bengel very justly sees a designed contrast to the sentence passed upon the Jews, in the words "Ye judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life" (ver. 46). Still the matter is not explained by what Bengel goes on to say: sic enim solet a Scriptura homini ascribi pernicies ipsius, sed salus ejus Deo. For the unbelief of the Jews, indeed, which had proved to the Gentiles the occasion of their accepting the Gospel, is, as we have seen, ascribed properly enough by St Paul to the eternal counsels and purpose of God (see Rom. xi. 11). But why might it not have been said with as much truth of the Gentiles in Antioch on the present occasion as formerly of the Jews in Jerusalem, "such

as gladly received the word were baptised" or "believed" (see Acts ii. 41)? Notwithstanding Bengel's great authority, we must proceed on the assumption, that in the case of every individual, Scripture derives the decision for life or for death as much from human as from Divine causation, and that it carries on both views parallel to the end. Generally, therefore, on the position maintained by Scripture, it is possible to refer both the decisive turning point, and also each co-operating element as well to the Divine as to the human volition. But inasmuch as, while the truth of this position consists in this, that one limb of the alternative is not denied for the sake of maintaining the other, yet the maintenance of both concurrently in one single act of thought is impossible; the consequence is, that that particular member is invariably put most prominently forward, which is most in danger of being overlooked; and under this limitation the remark of Bengel is true, for in the case of sin we are in danger of taking too low an estimate of our own causation. Whenever, therefore, the Scriptures depart from this rule, they have some special reason for giving prominence to that member which they put emphatically forward, and it is the duty of commentators to bring to light this particular motive. And this remark applies to every passage which speaks of the Almighty's hardening or blinding men. With the present passage it is not exactly, but very nearly, so. When in his Epistle to the Ephesians St Paul reminds himself and his hearers of the ultimate cause of their common redemption, and, therefore, makes mention of God's eternal election (see Eph. i. 4), this is perfectly consistent. Here, however, where a judicial sentence is in question, it is quite sufficient with regard to their reception into the Church, to point to its ultimate cause in the human will—to faith; but to make this faith again dependent on a previously appointed destination (ἦσαν τεταγμένοι), cannot in such a context admit of being referred to anything else than a peculiar view of the writer's. What, then, was this peculiar view of St Luke? It is apparent that, although at first the whole city was greatly excited by this message from God, a few individuals only believed; for, otherwise, the subsequent persecution of Paul and Barnabas would assuredly not have been possible (ver. 50). It was therefore the peculiar tendency of St Paul's preaching, since it

chiefly insisted on forgiveness of sins and justification as its principal motives, to make the decision of belief or unbelief a perfectly individual matter. This perfectly individual character of faith is made distinctly noticeable by the term ὅσοι. It was neither families nor corporations, and still less localities or cities, that went over to the faith, but in every case individuals only—one now, and again another. Let us not forget it, that what is here reported, is the first effect of the word of God now for the first time sent forth into the Gentile world, on the basis of the previous development of the history of redemption. How very different was it with Israel, when the first messenger from God came to the people. Then all the people ran to Him, and no individual soever was excluded (see Exod. iv. 31; xiv. 31).

St Luke might have contented himself with the report of the fact; but it was his wish to indicate that the phenomenon did not rest on accidental circumstances, which in another place might easily assume a different form; but that it was founded on the everlasting ordinances of God. And that certainly is a matter of great importance. In this Divine ordinance, to which St Luke refers us, there is a positive and a negative element. Let us only represent to ourselves the fact, that the two men who preached the gospel in Antioch, must in a short time proceed further on their journey; and then those who had become believers in Christ, would be left to themselves in the midst of the unbelieving Jews. Unless they can together form a community, they must under such circumstances, be irretrievably lost. But, now, how are they whose every tie had hitherto connected them with others, but who as yet had known no common bond of union with each other, nay, who comprised within their numbers the most incoherent and heterogeneous elements, all at once to form a firm and permanent community? Looking at the thing merely from a subjective point of view, this drawing together and union of persons who previously had been kept apart by every relation of nature and of circumstances, appears at best but a hazardous experiment. Very different, however, is the aspect which the matter assumes when the number and the choice of the believers is referred to an eternal purpose of God. By this means it is rendered indubitably certain, that those who had come to the faith, had been from the beginning designed for each other, in order to form together

a close and lasting communion for all eternity. We shall be the better able to appreciate the comfort of this positive element, if only we lay to heart the discouragement for the Gentiles which is involved in the negative element. We must, then, come back again to the contrast in ver. 46 to which Bengel has already called attention. Even when we know that, according to the teaching of Scripture, the exclusion of the Jews may just as well be referred to the Divine counsels, as the adoption of the Gentiles may be satisfactorily accounted for in an historical narrative by the fact of their faith, this undeniable contrariety acquires still more weight. It is intended thereby, in my opinion, to throw out distinctly the different position of Israel nationally in regard to the salvation of God as contrasted with the Gentile ; and, on this occasion of the first formation of a Church out of the Gentiles, and on the basis of the exclusion of Israel, which is carried on before our eyes, the Apostle sets before us in an historical way that which in the xi. chap. of his Epistle to the Romans he has detailed in a didactic form, for the benefit of all Gentiles. The present position of the world relatively to the Gospel is this: Israel shuts his heart against it, and at the same moment the Gentiles shew themselves favourably disposed to adopt it; and they are received without the least scruple or difficulty. With this turn of affairs the times of the Gentiles have dawned. But even simultaneously with the announcement of this change of circumstances, had the Lord, according to the statement of our author, given a clear intimation that these times of the Gentiles also are to come to an end (see Luke xxi. 24). According to St Paul, this end is the πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται (Rom. xi. 26). This event, therefore, will be a repetition of the commencement of the history of Israel, when the number of the members of the people was also the number of the faithful; only that at the end this faith will have Jesus Christ for its subject-matter, and for its final cause the birth of the new man, and thereby even will comprise within itself the whole life of the people as new-born of the Spirit. When this end shall be brought about, the kingdom of Jesus Christ will appear in the form of a national kingdom, such as its whole constitution requires. This form of things cannot, however, commence within the period of the times of the Gentiles; for as St Luke here testifies, according to the

ordinance of God, it is still only individuals that in each case are won over to the faith in Jesus. It cannot, indeed, fail to be that these should constantly gain other and still more numerous converts. It may also happen that these believers, as well by the Spirit of God dwelling in them, as by their own natural gifts, should acquire an influence among their countrymen, so as to remodel the national customs, language, and modes of thinking, and even the laws, and the public character and policy of their nation. But still the natural, however improved, is very far from being a state of things acceptable unto God. This can be attained only under the creative Spirit of God Himself, who communicates His grace to individuals. It cannot be brought about by any external and human influences.

It pre-supposes, consequently, the personal faith of all the members of a people, which, however, is never and nowhere assured to us within the times of the Gentiles, and which, according to our real position, we are not justified in expecting. For it is on this very account, that at the commencement of the redemption among the Gentiles, it is so distinctly stated that only so many believed as were fore-ordained of God; inasmuch as this election of individuals was to be the order of God's kingdom among the nations. Only after the restoration of Israel, and not before, will the nations of the Gentiles attain to a sanctified form and one acceptable to God, suitable for their admission nationally into the Heavenly kingdom. The passage, therefore, which we are considering, is sufficient to prove how erroneous it is, if, on account of the influence which proceeding from the body of Christians among the Gentiles, has undoubtedly been exercised upon the general condition and circumstances of nations, we think it possible to regard and treat them as Christian nations. Scripture knows of no distinction for all times, but that between Israel, the people of God, and the Gentiles, as the rest of the nations of the earth. According to Scripture, Christianity belongs not to any ethnographical or geographical sphere. Still less naturally, according to this, has the Christian state—an expression and idea which, like the bird of Minerva, has first showed itself to the eye of man in the evening twilight—found a place in the history and doctrines of Scripture. St Luke, after having made us acquainted with the important beginning and results of the first missionary

operations among the Gentiles, omits not to point out to us the continuance of this first effect, in such wise that we cannot but arrive at the conviction that this work is destined to have a future. No sooner, for instance, have any number of the Gentiles decided in favour of faith in Jesus Christ, but persecution is awakened; but not by the Gentiles, who are less inclined to hostility against the Gospel, but by the Jews, who are nothing behind their brethren in Judea, as St Paul (1 Thess. ii. 16) expresses it, "filling up (the measure of) their sins." The hostility of the Jews is so fierce, that although everywhere, and naturally also in Antioch, they are little liked by the Gentiles, they nevertheless manage to stir up the authorities of the city against the Apostles, and thereby to bring about a persecution against them (ver. 50). Paul and Barnabas shake off the dust from their feet against their persecutors (ἐπ' αὐτοὺς), by which term we are not to understand, as Meyer maintains, Gentiles only, but Gentiles and Jews (ver. 51). By this shaking off the dust from their feet the messengers of the Gospel wish to set forth in the full light of day their total separation from their persecutors; not even the least grain of dust from their soil is to be permitted to rest on their feet; for, as Tertullian in his remarks on the command of the Lord (Matt. x. 14)—which, beyond doubt, was on this occasion, present to the Apostles' minds—expresses himself: pulverem jubet excuti in illos, in testificationem et ad horrentiam terræ illorum, nedum communicationis reliquæ (see Grotius ad Matt. x. 14). Although, therefore, there were believers in the city of Antioch, still it was not they, but those rather who continued in unbelief, that deserved to be regarded as the representatives of the place, the ground, and the soil. We see, then, that as little as Christianity among the Gentiles is a national idea, so is it far from being a territorial one. But whatever it loses thereby in outward glory is made up to it in internal power and majesty. The Apostles depart from Antioch and follow the call which leads them onwards,—the believers alone remain behind. They have now, as is constantly shewn forth to them more and more distinctly, no trusty support, either in the Synagogue or in the civil polity of this heathen city. On the contrary, they are exposed on both sides to hatred and to persecution. If, then, it is, notwithstanding, said of them "but the disciples were filled with joy

and with the Holy Ghost" (ver. 52); it is in order that we should perceive that the communion which was grounded in the everlasting choice and ordinance of Divine grace for all individuals, was to them a more than abundant compensation for the want of all outward communion. Since, however, nothing is said of any signs and wonders in Antioch, this fullness of faith and joy rests merely on the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Thus do we here see, in the very midst of an hostile world, a fortress erected, by means of these Apostolical missionaries, which belongs to the kingdom of God, and is so impregnable that it has power to conquer the whole world.

It is impossible to determine the reasons which induced St Paul and Barnabas to proceed from Antioch to Iconium, unless (as we found it did in the case of Antioch), the existence there of a Synagogue, was on this occasion also the attraction. In Iconium, also, a Christian Church is founded by the labours of the two Apostles. In it, moreover, the several Jewish members are more numerous than they were in Antioch, without however, the community of the Jews coming in the least behind their Antiochene kinsmen in hostility to the Gospel. For the issue here also is a general persecution of the Apostles which the Jews had stirred up (xiv. 16). Upon this the Apostles betook themselves to Lystra and to Derbe (v. 7). Here, however, we are left entirely in the dark as to the motives which induced them to take this direction; but from all that precedes we have every right to assume that they were guided simply by the desire to press on to the goal of their vocation. The narrative dwells rather longer than usual on the stay of the Apostles in Lystra; probably because their labours brought them here into collision with the idŏlatry of the heathen. A man who had been lame from his mother's womb had been healed by the word of St Paul. This miraculous cure made such an impression in Lystra that the inhabitants, with the priests at their head, were preparing duly and solemnly to offer animal sacrifices to these two persons, whom they regarded as manifestations of their gods.

As a miracle is here recounted, it need not excite any surprise if the criticism which prevails in our days has contrived on that ground to advance many objections to the narrative before us. With respect to the superstitious belief which is here imputed to

the Lycaonians, Baur observes: "By this statement we are reminded of the old legends of appearances of the gods—especially of that description of them which is given in the legend of Philemon and Baucis; a sound criticism, however, instead of taking such legends to be a confirmation of the historical truth of the fact here narrated, must, on the contrary, convert the argument, and inquire whether the pretended fact ought not to be looked upon as an imitation of these ancient mythical incidents" (see his Apostel Paulus p. 100). Naturally it is not our intention in any respect to anticipate criticism in answering this, probably very fruitful, question. We shall only allow ourselves to remark that, in our opinion, there does not exist the slightest reason why, taking for granted the miracle wrought by the Apostles, the superstition here ascribed to the people of Lystra cannot be an historical fact. Baur, it is true, insists that this child-like faith of the Homeric world, such as is here implied, is not to be thought of for one moment in the times within which our present narrative moves. But what if nothing more was here in question than what was common to all the Hellenic nations of antiquity; among which we must, at any rate, reckon those Greek-speaking races of Asia Minor (see Hug. Einltg. in das N. T. ii. S. 30, 31). For while heathendom in general was incapable of drawing any line of demarcation between God and man; with the Hellenic heathens especially, the Divine and the human ran into each other and were easily confounded. And it is precisely this of which we have here a manifestation. We must try and bring home to our own minds how strong an impression the healing of the lame man by the simple word of a stranger would necessarily make upon the minds of these Hellenic heathens. This, at least, is self-evident, that by such an act they must have been raised to a state of great excitement, and their fundamentally erroneous views would naturally have led to such an assumption as that which is ascribed to them by St Luke. In perfectly general terms does the late writer Themistius remark, in a passage quoted by Wetstein, on this place: *ἀκήρατοι καὶ θεῖαι δυνάμεις ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐμβατεύουσι τὴν γὴν . . . . σώματα ἀμφιεσμέναι παραπλήσια τοῖς ἡμετέροις.* And when we seek to gain a still clearer notion of the physiognomy of these times, the instance of the worship paid to

Apollonius of Tyana readily suggests itself to every mind. But what is still more remarkable, Baur claims this phenomenon as supporting his own view. "Undoubtedly," he remarks, "Philostratus does say that the inhabitants of the country in which Apollonius was born (a locality, by the way, which, as Baur himself remarks, is very nearly coincident with that which we are here concerned about) did look upon Apollonius as a son of Jupiter;" but upon this Baur remarks, that this statement belongs merely to Philostratus' embellishments of his story, and that originally, in the opinion of the people, he passed for nothing more than a magician. But now, if that mental feature which alone could have induced Philostratus to venture on such an embellishment of his story, and moved the readers of his book to give credence to it, was at work here in Lystra in a far more original manner, shall we not, for a few hours, believe the existence of that superstition on whose duration Philostratus could confidently reckon for years. And that men did not always, and in all places, think so moderately of Apollonius, as the "truth" of the matter is ranked at by Baur, is shewn by the "Historia Augusta." Aurelian promises statues and temples to Apollonius, and Vopiscus says of him: "ipse pro numine frequentandus" (see Vita Aureliani c. 24). And, moreover, Alexander Severus was in the habit of offering sacrifices to him in his Lararium (see vita Alex. c. 29). Lastly, J. J. Pfizer, in his treatise de *Ἀποθεώσει* Pauli et Barnabæ in Syllog. Dissert. ed. Has. et. Iken. ii. 649, appeals, not without good reason, to the Apotheosis of Mithridates, of Alexander, and of the Roman emperors, all of which belong to the later times. But, further, the statement of our narrative that the people of Lystra, when they first gave utterance to their superstition, spoke in the tongue of Lycaonia (ver. 11), is, by Zeller, regarded as so incredible that he says he could more readily yield belief to all the rest than admit the truth of this trait (see Theol. Jahrb. 1849. 423). But the disposition to doubt, must, it seems to me, have gone very far indeed before any one could advance the assertion, that the author of this history of the Apostles had invented this incident of speaking in the Lycaonian tongue, in order, by that means, to allow the Apostles to gain the triumph of having a Divine worship fully prepared for them without their consciences being at all troubled

thereby. Such a common and pitiable device is ascribed to the author of our history, unless, indeed the people of Lystra did speak in the dialect of Lycaonia. Not, indeed, that the people of Lystra were not in any wise masters of this tongue; no, nothing can be objected to the assertion that Lycaonian was the ancient dialect of the country, which still remained in use along with the Greek —as, indeed, cannot well be called in question (cf. Jablonsky de lingua Lycaonica in Syllog. Dissert. ii. 638—648)—"but," says this criticism "it is very improbable that the wonder of the multitude should have vented itself all along in no other language than in one unintelligible to those who were the objects of the wondering amazement." Now, surely, it is quite allowable to set against this assertion another; that, namely, it is very probable that if the people of Lystra did give utterance to their astonishment on any exciting cause they would not express themselves in any other than that of Lycaonia. Of the correctness of this assertion it is easy to convince oneself any day, especially by observation of the lower orders of the people, in every case where two languages, one native, and one acquired, are in use.

But we have still behind that feature of the narrative at which criticism has taken the chief offence, and that is the resemblance between the present history and the healing of the lame man by St Peter and St John (see iii. 1—10). And in fact these critics have here the merit of having pointed to a circumstance, which hitherto, if it has not been left wholly unnoticed, (see Boernerus de actis Barnabæ et Pauli Lycaonicis in Syllog. Dissert. ii. 632), has at any rate never yet been duly estimated (see Schneckenburger Zweck d. Apostelgesch. S. 52; Baur. der Apostel Paulus S. 95; Zeller s. 421). That which Schneckenburger has characterised as the parallelising with St Peter which St Paul has had to undergo (and which, after him, has been made so much of) has its chief support in our present passage. This, therefore, is the most appropriate place for us to explain our opinion regarding this asserted parallel between the two Apostles. It cannot, for instance, be denied that upon comparing together the two passages in question, and contrasting them one with the other, as Zeller has done, the similarity in the expressions appears greater than that one can venture to hope to be able to explain it consistently without the hypothesis of its being

designed. Moreover, we have no wish to call in question the fact that in the respective spheres of their miraculous operations, as described by our historian, a striking correspondence is perceptible between the two Apostles. And just as in this instance the healing of the lame man by the word of St Paul suggests a comparison with that healing of the lame man in Jerusalem by the word of St Peter—a cure which was followed by such important consequences; so again the resistance offered to St Paul by the sorcerer Elymas (see xiii. 6—11), reminds us of what took place between St Peter and Simon Magus. Again, the cure of the paralytic by St Peter has its analogy in the case of the man sick with a fever, but healed by St Paul (see xxviii. 8), and the healing power which is ascribed to the shadow of St Peter (see ver. 15), corresponds to the miraculous efficacy of the handkerchiefs and aprons taken from the body of St Paul (see xix. 12). And further, precisely as St Peter resuscitates a young damsel from death (see ix. 36), so does St Paul call to life again the young man (see xx. 9). Lastly, to the same class we may also further refer the circumstance that just as superhuman honour is shown to St Peter on the part of Cornelius, so that St Peter is forced to refuse it (see x. 25, 26), here also divine honours are intended by the heathen to be paid to St Paul and his companion, and they are compelled to remind them of their human nature (see xiv. 15, cf. xxviii. 7).

But now, is there no other way of explaining this correspondence in the history of these two Apostolical men than that so affected by these critics—namely, by regarding these parallel passages merely as the work of the narrator and writer? If St Paul testifies of himself *τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ Ἀποστόλου κατειργάσθη*; —*ἐν σημείοις καὶ τέρασι καὶ δυνάμεσι* (2 Cor. xii. 12), and when he moreover says, *λογίζομαι μηδὲν ὑστερηκέναι τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων* (2 Cor. xi. 5), by this appeal to miracles in confirmation of his Apostleship, we are, in my opinion, referred by St Luke to a very different person,—even to Him who, in the opening of the work we are explaining, is so significantly and so impressively set forth as the ascended Lord of Heaven, and as the efficient and causative agent in the last resort of all that is recorded in the subsequent history. It is even the very person whom St Paul alludes to when he writes *ὁ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ εἰς ἀποστολὴν τῆς Περιτομῆς*; *ἐνέργησε καὶ ἐμοὶ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη* (Gal. ii. 8). He, indeed,

had withdrawn into the depths of heaven; and as has been shown by many unmistakeable signs, it is His earnest purpose to remain hidden, even while He works and rules, so that even His own cannot yet see His kingdom (see Heb. ii. 8); but at the same time He nevertheless still deigns to come forth from His retirement and to manifest Himself, who, in the end of time, is to rule over and to fill all external things with His glory. This is the meaning of the signs and wonders which forthwith accompanied that first work in the kingdom of the spirit—even the filling with the Holy Spirit which proved the very foundation of it. Since then the Lord does interfere with the domain of external things by signs and wonders, it has its ground in the very nature of such a kind of operation that, by the method and manner of signs and wonders, He should allow the order which belongs to the kingdom of God, and which in so far is hidden, to attain to an outward manifestation. Accordingly, when He had settled this order for His kingdom, that as St Peter was the Apostle of the circumcision, so St Paul should be the Apostle of the uncircumcision, are we not naturally led to expect that He would also allow a similar parallel to be apparent even in those deeds which He permitted to be performed for the manifestation of their Apostolic authority? The men of Lystra see in the healing of the lame man nothing further than what the Jews formerly recognised in the miracle of St Peter—a divine work. But the believers who still retained in their memories the deed of St Peter, must, so soon as they heard of the miracle wrought by St Paul in Lystra, have discerned in it a sign that it was the will of their Lord to set forth and to magnify St Paul in the face of the heathen, and therefore to have him regarded exactly in the same light as He had formerly set forth St Peter relatively to the Jews. And since St Paul tells us that though Jerusalem had seen that he had been entrusted with the Gospel to the uncircumcision, in the same way as St Peter had been entrusted with that to the circumcision (Gal. ii. 7), we have every ground for referring the conviction thus experimentally acquired, in an essential measure, to their knowledge that the miraculous agency of St Paul resembled that of St Peter the Apostle (cf. xv. 12). Accordingly, Luke does nothing more in this passage than he invariably does elsewhere. He searches out, that is, the works

and signs of the ascended Lord, and by putting them on record, (so far at least as the knowledge of them is likely to be of importance for future times) he rescues them from oblivion and misrepresentation. This is the truth in the proposition which Baur advances in his essay on the Episcopate in the Christian Church when he says: that in the Acts of the Apostles, Peter appears as Pauline as possible, and Paul as Petrine as possible (S. 142 cf. Tübinger Zeitschr. 1838. iii. 143). For as to the deduction unfavourable to the trustworthy transmission of doctrine in the Acts of the Apostles, which these critics have endeavoured to draw from it; on the one hand they rest on what we have already seen to be a false conception of the doctrine of St Peter, and on the other are founded on a false notion of that of St Paul, as by and bye will appear. And whatever charges of misrepresenting facts, in this regard, these critics object against this History of the Apostles, they arise solely from this source, that instead of giving to each narrative due and sufficient attention, people content themselves too often with a superficial comparison of them. We have already met with several instances of such overhasty conclusions, and shall meet with many more in the further course of our investigations.

The more strongly the narrative of the cure of the lame man in Lystra reminds us of the first miracle of St Peter in Jerusalem, the more loudly does a comparison of the impression made by each call for a due consideration. The first miracle in Jerusalem became the signal for the persecution of the Apostles, the first miracle in Asia Minor proved the occasion for the divine worship of the Apostles. That in all this again we have to recognise the difference between the Jews and the Gentiles in their conduct relatively to the Gospel, admits not of dispute. No doubt but the worship which the people of Lystra were anxious to pay to these two Apostolical personages was, indeed, of a very impure kind. At best it could but afford them an occasion for instructing the Gentiles in the true nature and operations of God. It may probably be right to ascribe to St Paul the instructive words addressed to the men of Lystra, although throughout this business Barnabas again takes precedence in the narrative (ver. 14), probably because the people of Lystra, in their veneration, preferred him (ver. 12) on account, no doubt, of his more

imposing exterior, which in St Paul was wanting (see 2 Cor. x. 10). This short address may, therefore, belong to St Paul, since here, as indeed in every place after their visit to Paphos, he was the chief speaker. But now Schneckenburger advances it as his opinion that "in this speech there is nothing truly Pauline, on the contrary, by a tacit distinction (ver. 16), the pre-eminence is reserved to Judaism" (see ibid. S. 129). And then again, he makes use of this remark to cast suspicion on the authenticity of our work. In this view of the speech, however, no little perversity of judgment is apparent. For it is not merely clear that the address is perfectly appropriate to the circumstances, but every leading thought in it can be attested by the Pauline Epistles. The method of arguing from the nullity of the idols to the living God will be felt by every one to be quite consistent in this place, as also the fact that the speaker should forthwith designate the living God as the maker of Heaven and earth. For it was precisely in this that the fundamental error of heathendom consisted, that it removed the limits between the Creator and the creature, and thereby had entirely lost all idea of the Creator as such. And it was nothing less than the requirement both of wisdom and of love, that as soon as the contradiction and condemnation of the ideas of heathendom had been advanced, the only excuse which could serve to palliate the fault of the men of Lystra should not be kept back (vv. 16, 17). That in such a case as that before us the Apostle of the Gentiles could, nay must speak in this way, will at once be evident to every unprejudiced mind. Now, of St Paul it is easily demonstrable, that on the one hand he recognized the essence of heathendom precisely in this darkening of the consciousness with regard to the Creator (see Rom. i. 25, 23), and on the other hand, that he set out from the assumption that in His works God had from time to time revealed to the heathens His eternal power and goodness (see Rom. i. 20); just as the speaker, in his address to the people of Lystra, maintains that God had not left Himself without witness among them. But, lastly, as regards the insinuation of Schneckenburger that there is in it a latent spirit of Judaism, it recoils wholly and entirely on the head of its author. For what is here said, with regard to the Gentiles, of God's leaving nations to walk in their own ways, is in fact nothing else than the fundamental

assumption of the whole biblical history of Redemption (cf. Deut. iv. 19, 20), and that St Paul did not think differently on this matter is simply proved by the single passage Rom. iii. 2.

In Lystra, too, it is the Jews who raise a persecution against the Gospel, and thereby prove themselves to be of the same stock with their brethren in Jerusalem, who, on a former occasion, persecuted the Apostles for their cure of the lame man. (cf. 1 Thess. ii. 14—16). The hatred of the Jews here exhibits a vehemence such as we have nowhere witnessed before. As in Lystra itself it does not appear that there were any Jews, those of Iconium and Antioch set out with the view of stirring up the people of Lystra against the Apostles. The same zeal which, on a former occasion, allowed no rest to Saul of Tarsus in Jerusalem, has here seized a whole multitude of Jews. How restless and passionate their zeal was, we only fully see from the result. These stranger Jews succeed in inflaming the animosity of this very people of Lystra, who but lately were ready to do sacrifice to these wonder-working men, to such a degree that St Paul was nearly stoned to death by them (Acts xiii. 19, 20; cf. 2 Cor. xi. 25). Unquestionably we may herein again discern clearly enough how the heathen susceptibility for the Gospel was very far from anything like a fundamental and abiding sentiment. The fanatical hatred of these foreign Jews found little difficulty in converting the minds of the whole city from superstitious reverence into deadly hatred. Does then the preaching and the sign of St Paul in Lystra prove all in vain? By no means. Even in this city, where, for the first time, there was no synagogue to furnish a rallying point, and where the Jews took up none but a hostile position, yet, in spite of all the fickleness of mind and hostility here evinced, a band of disciples was nevertheless gathered around the Gospel.

Lastly, Paul and Barnabas proceed to Derbe, where nothing remarkable occurred except what in every case must be called a great event; a considerable number of disciples were gained to the faith in Jesus (ver. 21). This is the fourth spot at which the two messengers of salvation on their first journey are permitted to see a permanent result of their labours. As in the beginning Nimrod founded four cities in each of his two king-

doms; and as four kings represented the hostile power with which Abraham the father of Israel had to contend, and subsequently as the power of the world ever appears under four representatives, so here, in the very midst of the empire of Satan, the Lord founds first of all four cities, which are destined to spread light and life in the darkness and shadow of death among the Gentiles. In the completion of the number four the servants of Christ see a preliminary close of their progressive preaching. That they ought not to go further, and to work on indefinitely, must have been made clear to them simply by the wants of the newly converted. The new converts in any case, and especially in the extreme isolation in which they were placed, stood in need of the strengthening and confirming presence of the Apostles. And such was the work which Paul and Barnabas now undertook (ver. 22). As regards the present, they admonish them of the faith in which it is their duty to continue, and as regards the future, of the kingdom of God into which they must enter. From this allusion to the kingdom of God, we see that the Apostles did not keep back from the Gentiles the instruction as to a future manifestation of the kingdom of God. It also becomes immediately evident that they connected this instruction concerning the kingdom of God with the present. For manifestly the preaching of the necessity of much tribulation in order to entering into the kingdom of God must have been accompanied with some word of consolation. Consequently, the present time of much affliction must have been contrasted with the future period of dwelling in the kingdom of God, and the exhortation to patient abiding in the former have been founded on the prospect of the latter. If, therefore, in the report of St Luke, people pretend to miss an account of what it was that these missionaries imparted to the heathen (see Schneckenburger ibid. S. 128, 129); on the one hand, such general expressions as *πείθειν ; προσμένειν τῇ χάριτι* (xiii. 43), *ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου* (xiii. 49), *λαλεῖν ὥστε πιστεῦσαι* (xiv. 1), *λόγος τῆς χάριτος* (xiv. 3), *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* (xiv. 7, 21), which point back to the earlier narratives, have not been sufficiently weighed; and, on the other, especially the allusions that are given in this passage itself have not been duly considered. From all this it shines out quite distinctly that the believers from among the Gentiles were instructed to distinguish

two positions: an internal and an external one; in relation to the former, an essential difference had occurred; their new position is the faith which they have adopted. In respect to it, they were admonished to be stedfast and to persevere. In it, therefore, they had already reached to the consummation. Their outward position, on the contrary, remained the same as before; the empire under which they had hitherto lived continues possessed of the same power; and they, too, continue to be subject to it. Consequently, their internal position is at issue with their external one, and this constitutes their oppression. But just as a change has taken place in their inward being—as a pure unchangeable faith has taken the place of the unstable evil of the world; so at last the place of the empire of the world and its rulers shall be taken by the princes of the kingdom of God and His anointed.

But this inward strengthening of the soul was not their only need: it was necessary to lay the foundation of order in the several Churches. The life of faith in the four cities of Asia Minor found no stay or support, either in the Synagogue of the Jews, or in the social constitution of the Heathen. It is, therefore, only agreeable to common prudence, if Saul and Barnabas, before they leave their several companies of the faithful, should assist them in establishing a steady organisation. The several bands of the believers were formed into Churches, and over them were placed elders (ver. 23), after the model of those of Palestine. It has been a question, whether in this organisation of their body, the Christians were permitted to co-operate, or whether the Apostles in these regulations acted as possessing fulness of power, and of themselves nominated and appointed these presbyters. From all that we have hitherto discovered in the work before us of the relation subsisting between the Apostles and the believers, we find it antecedently impossible to suppose this. It is true, these believers are but recent converts; but still they are unhesitatingly spoken of as believers in the Lord (ver. 23), and as such, they are consequently partakers of the same Spirit as fills the Apostles. Now, it is inconceivable that such communion of the Spirit should not have been duly recognised in a matter like this, which most immediately concerned the believers. And, inasmuch as the mode of proceeding in the election of the seven deacons stood forth as a model at all times

for the initiatory organisation of Churches, it is impossible to suppose that in the times immediately succeeding the Apostles, the concurrence of the laity in the nomination of bishops should be held to be so essential, as is undeniably the case (see Guerike christliche Archæologie, S. 48, 49, Eng. trans. p. 37, 38, Augusti Denkwurdigkeiten xi. 259, &c.), unless this had been the practice from the very beginning of the Gentile Church, at whose threshold we are now standing. On this supposition, the custom of the Apostolical missionaries to leave the several bands of Christian converts for awhile to follow a purely internal development becomes easily explicable; for, in this period, it was the Apostle's object that the several characters and capacities which the Holy Spirit had called into being should manifest and distinguish themselves, in order to their attaining to their appropriate position and employment in the Church, by the judgment of the whole body, and the ratification of the Apostles. And in fact that which on general grounds occurs to us as the most probable course in these matters, is also intimated clearly enough in the narrative itself. Luther, it is true, has rendered χειροτονεῖν in ver. 23, by "ordain;" and on this rendering, Löhe builds his opinion that in this passage the greatest possible self-reliance and fulness of authority is ascribed to the Apostles (see Aphorismen. S. 58). But even though in its later usage χειροτονεῖν may have acquired the general signification of the supreme investiture of officials, yet, in its original acceptation, it signified an election, by holding up of the hands; and this signification is clearly established by 2 Cor. viii. 18, 19, to be still surviving in the phraseology of the New Testament. Besides, the transition from the original to the secondary signification of the word was brought about by the course of political development, whereas in the Church not only did there exist no such ground for the later usage, but, on the contary, an opposite influence might be supposed to be at work. Accordingly, we must allow that Rothe is right, when, with regard to the passage before us, he maintains that the most natural interpretation of χειροτονήσαντες αὐτοῖς is assuredly the one which adheres the closest to the original acceptation of the word: "they—the two Apostles—allow presbyters to be chosen for the community by voting" (see Rothe Anfänge der christlichen Kirche S. 150; cf.

Neander Geschichte der Pflanz. u. Leit. I. 203. Simon, die apostolische Gemeine- und Kirchenverfassung, S. 27).

Having thus organised the four communities in the four cities of Asia Minor, Paul and Barnabas look upon the work on which they had set forth, as brought to a preliminary conclusion (ver. 26). Accordingly, they returned back to Antioch in Syria, from which they had been commissioned. Without doubt they felt it to be desirable, that before the diffusion of the Gospel was carried further, the first seats of the Christian life should previously be apprised of the gain which the Church had made by its enlargement in the territory of the Gentiles, which not only had been newly commenced, but had also been carried to a satisfactory preliminary close, in order that, thereafter, they might recommence their labours with new joy, and with fresh hopes of further victories. On this account, the very first thing that the messengers do on their return to Antioch, is to gather the Church together, and to rehearse to them all that God had done with them, and above all, how He had opened unto the Gentiles also the door of faith. And in order that this call of the Gentiles to the faith, in a way, and to an extent, that they had as yet neither known nor dreamed of, might be fully brought home to the mind of the metropolis of the Gentile Christian world, and also bear its fruits, the two missionaries, we are told, abode in Antioch a long time with the disciples (ver. 28).

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.